



THE INDEPENDENT

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WEATHER: Dull and cold

(IR45p) 40p

NEWS

Page 2 in new clothes — though not by Galliano
(he's on page 14)



THE TABLOID

Chris Evans: the sad truth



THE TABLOID

Bridget Jones meets her millennium



Cold light on the children's hell

Britain's biggest abuse inquiry begins: 650 cases, up to 80 staff involved at 30 homes

Roger Dobson

A terrible story is stumbling into the daylight. For years, a countless number of children were systematically abused in children's homes across North Wales. At least 10 are now dead — most of them from suicide. Yesterday the scale of their suffering emerged. As Gerard Elias QC said at the start of the tribunal of inquiry into the scandal, if the allegations were accepted "they will compel the conclusion that children in care in Clwyd and Gwynedd during the period under review were abused physically or sexually on a scale which borders on wholesale exploitation".

Mr Elias, counsel to the tribunal, said a staggering 650 people who were in care in North Wales in a 25-year period from the mid-1970s had made complaints of abuse to police. Around 180 will give evidence to Britain's biggest inquiry into alleged maltreatment of children in care.

"The content, volume and consistency of statements made by complainants to the tribunal appeared cogent and very impressive," Mr Elias told the tribunal, headed by Sir Ronald Waterhouse, a retired High Court judge.

The role of social services would be investigated. "It seems an inescapable conclusion, if wholesale abuse occurred, that some of those in positions of responsibility within the social service departments must have been, at the best, careless as to the plight of many of the children in their care... or at worst, negligent to the point of gross professional incompetence, or even guilty of deliberate 'eyes closing' to the state of affairs which existed in some of the homes they helped to administer."

Many of the allegations came to light as a result of articles in *The Independent* and *Independent on Sunday* over the last five years, starting with revelations about conditions at Bryn Estyn, near Wrexham. The tribunal



Bryn Estyn: home at centre of scandal Photograph: Tom Pilton

was set up after we reported the refusal of the now defunct Clwyd County Council to publish an independent report into the abuse allegations.

As many as 80 people, and six police officers, alleged to have been involved in the abuse may also give evidence to the tribunal, expected to last 12 months and cost up to £10m.

Mr Elias said the inquiry would be thorough and that no stone would be left unturned. Any allegations of organised abuse would be investigated, he said. Councils and their insurers were also criticised in his opening speech.

"No civilised society may tolerate such abuse of its children, and no

civilised society will consider those who find themselves in care to be in any different position to those who enjoy the benefits of living at home under the care and control of their parents," Mr Elias said.

He added: "The abuse of a child is not only a most serious breach of trust by the adult concerned, it may well have had far-reaching and long-lasting consequences for the child victim which frequently outlive childhood. For too many, it seems, the consequences have been too hard to bear and suicide has seemed the only way out. At least 10 former children in care in North Wales who have alleged abuse in this period are now dead, most of these are known to have taken their own lives."

He said that the evidence will have significance throughout the country for the safety and well-being of children in care.

He said one of the questions that will be looked at was whether abuse was a series of unrelated occurrences

or whether it bore the hallmarks of organisation or infiltration "by those with a determination to exploit vulnerable children".

He said the tribunal would also look at how complaints were made. "The overwhelming response of those seen by the tribunal's interview team has been that complaining was not a real option, it brought no relief but risked yet worse treatment."

Mr Elias, who continues his opening speech today, said that the role of the insurers of councils in North Wales would also be investigated.

As the tide of complaints reached its crescendo in the 1990s, the loudest clamour seems to have come from the insurers of the local authorities who were anxious that abuse should be debated by members in private.

Reports of inquiries were an 'encouragement to the handwaggon complaints', and with this approach, what might perhaps be called the hold-the-lid-on-at-all-costs approach, the Clwyd authority ap-

pears to have connived," Mr Elias said.

He said that from a police investigation in 1991, the tribunal team had identified more than 650 individual complainants.

Mr Elias said the tribunal, which is being held in Ewloe, Flintshire, had also surveyed a random sample of 600 children in care and found that some of them also complained of abuse. "This has been a valuable exercise because most of the individuals approached have not hitherto been interviewed by the police or made any independent claim for compensation. They have not been motivated apparently by money, publicity or any external encouragement to complain, as may be suggested by others."

The tribunal is inquiring into alleged abuse in more than 30 homes in North Wales from 1974.

Sir Ronald ruled that complainants and alleged abusers cannot be identified during the hearings.

Tony Blair's 'stalker' is exposed

Deputy Prime Minister strides into enemy territory to assault defecting captains of industry

Michael Harrison

The Deputy Prime Minister, Michael Heseltine, clashed spectacularly yesterday with some of Britain's top bosses after they published a report endorsing key elements of Labour policy, including the Social Chapter and a national minimum wage.

In a gung-ho exhibition of guerrilla politics, Mr Heseltine used a leftist London conference to attack businessmen associated with Tony Blair. The Labour leader, who had earlier spotted Mr Heseltine sitting smouldering at the launch of the report, complained that the Deputy Prime Minister was becoming his personal stalker.

He joked that Mr Heseltine had pursued him to his office to talk about the Millennium Exhibition last week and had pursued him to yesterday's event; if he turned up at his speech in Amsterdam next Friday, he would have to resort to the new stalking laws.

The Deputy Prime Minister, who gatecrashed the conference in London after the organisers failed to invite a single member of the Government, accused the group of being a "front organisation for the Labour Party".

Among the members of the Commission on Public Policy and British Business are George

to leave the Conservatives' industrial relations and enterprise reforms of the Eighties unchanged but offered a new agenda on education, welfare reform, the infrastructure, Europe and competition policy.

Mr Heseltine then took the platform and launched a withering assault on both the commission and its report, accusing it of "seriously understating" the Government's achievements, failing to recognise the threat posed by the left, using out of date and selective statistics, and ignoring the trade unions, save for two brief mentions.

"I must in honesty, go further. I question the motives of those who cloak their political intentions with academic respectability," he said.

Afterwards, John Monks, general secretary of the Trades Union Congress and a member of the commission, described Mr Heseltine's attacks as "pretty disgraceful". "It shows how out of touch with the agenda for the future. He is trying to rally business support behind the Tories but he is fighting the battles of the Seventies and Eighties," he said.

Last night the commission members fired off a letter rejecting any suggestion that they had any political agenda and saying that the launch of their report, "Promoting Prosperity", went very well.

But it goes on: "Among the positive comments, however, Michael Heseltine, in a piece of political knockabout, described the commission as a 'front for the Labour Party' and suggested that we are attempting somehow to 'curry favour' with Mr Blair and his colleagues."

"We were rather surprised at his comments, given that the commissioners are drawn from across the political spectrum and represent all sectors of British business. We have no party political agenda: our aim is simply to promote British prosperity."

Business comment, page 19



Proximity talks: Mr Heseltine at the meeting, another close encounter with Mr Blair

Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

Virtual bank heralds the cashless society

Jul Treanor
Banking Correspondent

The Royal Bank of Scotland is to set up what it claims is the first full Internet banking service in Britain, marking an important step on the road towards virtual banking and the cashless society.

The move could lead to a stampede from other banks in Britain to offer such services, and may hasten the demise of the branch network which is already under threat from telephone banking.

Retailers already allow shoppers to buy a wide range of products on the Internet and while other banks in Britain do offer services on personal computers, notably the TSB, the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) claims its service is different because it is Internet-wide and more sophisticated.

RBS, based in Edinburgh, said it intended to roll out the Internet service to its half-million telephone banking customers in the spring. Some 50,000 of its customers have access to the Internet. To join, customers will need a

personal computer, a modem and Microsoft software.

RBS, which pioneered telephone sales of insurance through its Direct Line subsidiary a decade ago, claimed to have overcome the security problems of Internet banking. A spokesman said it would take "longer than the universe has been around" to break in.

The human face of banking is gradually disappearing as new technology, including telephone banking, allows customers to move cash and to

pay bills without visiting their branches. The number of bank branches in Britain has been slashed by 3,000 to about 10,000 in the past six years and NatWest alone has announced the loss of a further 10,000 jobs. But RBS said Internet banking did not mean more job cuts.

Experts say that this type of banking could eventually be used to provide a full banking service, including the transfer of cash into electronic purses, but this is likely to be many years away. Internet revolution, page 18

QUICKLY

Loyalists warned

The Government issued a public warning to loyalist groups that more violence would jeopardise the place of smaller loyalist parties at the talks. Page 4

Operatic fall-out

Raymond Gubbay, the impresario, has attacked Royal Opera House and English National Opera, saying that they are scared of commercial competition and "arrogant" not to have touring plans. Page 2

Millwall collapse

Millwall Holdings, the parent company of the second division football team, called in the administrators after shares were suspended at 4p, valuing the club at £14m. Page 19

Mental care failing

Services for the mentally ill in London are near to collapse and unable to sustain the demands made on them, according to a study. Page 5

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GPs demand U-turn on supermarket surgeries

Doctors leaders will today press for a U-turn over plans which could allow supermarkets to open doctors' surgeries, at a meeting with Department of Health officials. The BMA is threatening to attack the Government in the general election campaign for "privatising" the family doctor service, unless the Secretary of State for Health, Stephen Dorrell, backs down.

Such a charge would infuriate ministers, but leave the Tories highly vulnerable. Labour has been accusing the Government of planning the privatisation of the NHS for some time, but the backing of the doctors would make the charge stick.

Ministerial sources said they would be seeking a compromise by offering movement on other issues, including a BMA demand for a proper timetable for pilot schemes in primary care, before they are introduced nationally.

But the Government sources appeared to rule out any retreat on the proposals to allow private companies to hire GPs. The plan is part of the NHS Primary Care Bill, which is due to go through its final stages in the Lords tomorrow before starting its passage through the Commons on 11 February. If there is an early election, there is a strong chance that Mr Dorrell will be forced to concede to Labour to get the rest of the Bill on the Statute Book.

Colin Brown

Reducing traffic set to become law

A radical Bill to encourage councils to reduce traffic levels in their areas has a good chance of becoming law, according to its Liberal Democrat sponsors. The Traffic Reduction Bill, introduced by the MP for Bath, Don Foster, would require local authorities to draw up targets to reduce traffic growth for the years 2005 and 2010. It has the support of 220 MPs.

Since Mr Foster agreed to remove the requirement for national targets, the Government has indicated that it will not oppose the Bill, which has its second reading on Friday. A mass rally in support of the Bill is being held in Westminster Central Hall at lunchtime today. Drivers written off, page 7

Christian Wolmar

Veteran comedy producer dies



The producer Dennis Main Wilson, one of the guiding spirits behind BBC comedy classics like *The Goon Show* (left), *Hancock's Half Hour* and *Till Death Us Do Part*, died from cancer yesterday.

Mr Main Wilson, 72, whose showbusiness career spanned 50 years, also worked on *Citizen Smith*, *The Mary Feldman Show*, and *The Rag Trade*. He helped launch the careers of Peter Sellers, Spike Milligan, Eric Sykes, Kenneth Williams and more recently, Stephen Fry.

A passionate believer in building newcomers' careers, he also developed the Cambridge University Footlights for BBC2. That gave TV experience to people like Clive Anderson, Tony Slattery, Emma Thompson and Hugh Laurie. Main Wilson also discovered many talented writers. Two of whom, Johnny Speight - who wrote *Till Death Us Do Part* - and John Sullivan - writer of hits like *Only Fools and Horses* - are regarded as the best of their generation.

David Lister

Challenge to league tables fails

An attempt by a head teachers' union to challenge Government plans to publish primary school league tables was defeated in the High Court yesterday.

The National Association of Head Teachers had sought a judicial review of the way schools' performance is calculated in the tables, to be published in March. It said children who missed the tests through absence and those with special needs should not be included in the results.

The union failed to demonstrate that the Secretary of State had been unreasonable in deciding on the basis for the calculations.

Lucy Ward

Jilted killer jailed for life

A man who stabbed his former girlfriend and her new boyfriend to death two days after being released from psychiatric hospital was jailed for life yesterday. A jury at Chester Crown Court found Andrew Cole, 26, of Llandrindod Wells, Powys, guilty of murdering Fiona Ovis, 28, and Ronnie Crompton, 18.

He had admitted killing the couple but denied murder charges on the grounds of diminished responsibility and provocation.

Cole had met Miss Ovis and Mr Crompton when they were all patients at the Mid-Wales (Psychiatric) Hospital in Talgarth. He formed a sexual relationship with the woman and became "infatuated" by her, the court heard. But she called off the meetings and began seeing Mr Crompton.

Cole stabbed the couple to death after he apparently discovered them having sex.

He rained blows down upon the couple, put a tape recorder through the letter box of the bungalow where they were meeting and "flipped" when it recorded moans and groans.

Louise Jury

people



Raymond Gubbay during a break in rehearsal yesterday (Photograph: Edward Sykes)

Classical maverick cocks a snook at opera's old guard

Raymond Gubbay is a larger than life impresario who has done more than almost anyone to bring classical music to the British public. Now he is taking his campaign to the Royal Albert Hall, and he is furious. The Royal Opera House has tried to block his rehearsal, and the British musical establishment is cold-shouldering him, he told *The Independent* yesterday.

Gubbay, often derided as a classical music vandal, has attacked the Royal Opera House for overmanaging and restrictive practices after mounting a co-production with them a few years ago. Now he has returned to the attack, saying the public will not visit that "arrogant" of the Royal Opera and English National Opera to have no plans to tour the country, and that the major subsidised opera companies are scared of commercial competition.

The head of the Royal Opera, Nicholas Payne, had a private meeting with him, he told us, and said "they wanted to do Carmen there themselves. The attitude was that because they are Covent Garden they can do what they like... it's protectionism, and why should I know how to do it?"

Gubbay, 50, once worked for Pathe Newsreel, where he used to hold the lights outside Number 10 Downing Street. He became a concert promoter in the 1960s and has carved out a reputation for his "classic spectacular" concerts with fireworks and lasers, and recitals by big-name artists such as Kiri Te Kanawa and Pavarotti, and The Teddy Bears, which have introduced young children to classical music in a lighthearted and informal way.

Carmen opens on 6 February and will run for 10 performances, with ticket prices all below £40. It is expected to play to over 40,000 people.

David Lister, Arts News Editor

Oldest survivor of the Titanic dies at the age of 100

The oldest survivor of the *Titanic* disaster, Edith Haisman, has died aged 100. Only five survivors of the disaster now remain - all of them well into their 80s and 90s. Mrs Haisman was 15 when she made the fateful crossing with her family, who were hoping to make a new life in Seattle.

Her father, Thomas Brown, perished with 1,522 others on 14 April 1912 when the liner hit an iceberg.

Along with her mother, Elizabeth, Mrs Haisman was one of the few who found space on a lifeboat.

Throughout her life, Mrs Haisman was haunted by the memory.

She said last year: "It was a long time ago that it happened, but you do not forget it. I had it for years on my mind. It never goes away."

She also remembered that her father had a presentiment that something awful would occur. "As I



Edith Haisman: Haunted lifetime

was walking up the gangplank, my father... turned white. He had some sort of idea that something was going to happen."

She last saw her father standing on deck, with a glass of brandy in one hand and a cigar in the other. He waved and said: "I will see you in New York."

Mother of missing Zoe protests innocence after release

The mother of the missing Wiltshire schoolgirl Zoe Evans yesterday said she still desperately hopes her daughter will be found alive.

Paula Evans, 28, speaking through her lawyer, vehemently denied she had anything to do with the disappearance of the nine-year-old. The mother of two was said to be "completely drained and exhausted" and

remained at a secret address after being released from police custody without charge. She and Zoe's stepfather, Miles Evans, 23, an Army driver, were held for questioning for 60 hours. Police fear the girl is dead.

Richard Griffiths, the solicitor who represented her during the questioning, said yesterday: "Mrs Evans emphatically says she is

innocent of any involvement in the disappearance of Zoe. She still hopes against hope that Zoe is alive somewhere and will turn up. She is as anxious to help as anyone, even when she herself does not know the answers... She understands the police have a duty to discover what has happened. But she has made it absolutely clear she has given all the help she can."

briefing

EMPLOYMENT

Go on, tell your boss what you think of him

Telling your bosses what you think of them is good for the organisation, according to research by the Institute of Employment Studies. The so-called "360-degree review" in which the individual manager receives "personal feedback" from subordinates, colleagues and customers is essential for the development of executives who can be isolated and insulated, the institute found in a study of eight organisations including BT, the Post Office and BP.

However, the report counsels that criticism must be constructive because it can be "quite devastating". Such schemes have to be "formal" but not too highly structured, otherwise they can limit the amount recipients learn about themselves.

Personal Feedback: Cases in Point, Institute of Employment Studies, £27, from Grantham Book Services, Isaac Newton Way, Alma Park Industrial Estate, Grantham NG31 9SD. Barrie Clement



AGRICULTURE

Complacency over rural heritage

Ministers are complacent about the protection of England's most valuable agricultural land from irreversible development, it was claimed yesterday. The Council for the Protection of Rural England said the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food had, between 1988 and 1995, failed to object to planning applications involving development on farmland over 10 times the size of Bristol.

And over the same period, MAFF objected to applications for development on less than 25 per cent of the highest grade agricultural land and less than 20 per cent of land involving the top three grades.

"The figures reveal MAFF's continuing complacency towards protecting even our best farmland," said CPRE rural affairs officer, Gregor Hutchison. MAFF's relaxed attitude risked squandering a vital and precious finite resource, he added.

SCHOOLS

Extra-curricular inactivity

Shortages of funds and teaching time are hampering schools' efforts to boost pupils' academic performance through extra-curricular activities. A survey of 62 London schools by Education Extra, the foundation for after-school activities, such as sports, pastimes and even homework clubs revealed 90 per cent of secondaries and 80 per cent of primaries hoping to increase their provision could not do so because staff were already overworked.

The majority also reported serious problems funding these activities despite believing they were vital to students' success.

The findings come a week after government-backed research indicated after-school clubs were as effective as homework in helping children achieve in the classroom.

Capital Gains, £3.50 from Education Extra, St Margaret's House, 17 Old Ford Road, London, E2 9PL. Tel: 0181-983 1061.

Lucy Ward

FOOD

EU red tape blamed for hunger

Excessive biotechnology regulation by the European Union is perpetuating mass hunger, according to the Social Affairs Unit (SAU). Biotechnology is the use of organisms or parts to create goods and services, such as the controversial genetically modified soya, or the "flava-sava" tomato.

An SAU report says such advances could make it possible to feed the world with an ever-increasing world population - conservatively estimated to more than double in 11.3bn by 2010 - agricultural production will have to increase dramatically.

But the EU's decision to operate on the "cautionary principle" - avoiding any potential risks, is censoring innovation, the report argues. Professor Henry Miller, former director of biotechnology at the US Food and Drug Administration, said: "Biotechnology is widely misunderstood. It is seen as a sci-fi Frankenstein monster."

Biotechnology Regulation, £5, the Social Affairs Unit, 314-322 Regent Street, London W1R 5AB. Tel: 0171 637 4356

Glenda Cooper

ENVIRONMENT

Cool times - but warmer climes

Global warming is continuing - despite cooler temperatures last year, according to new figures released by the Meteorological Office yesterday.

The temperature last year was about 0.21C warmer than the 30-year average, which is around 11C. But it is still some way behind the record change of 0.38C in 1995.

The 0.21C change may not seem remarkable, but a Met Office spokesman, Andy Yeatman, said: "Five degrees from one day to the next is neither here nor there. But last time the average global temperature was five degrees lower, we had an ice age. So 0.21 of a degree is quite a significant change."



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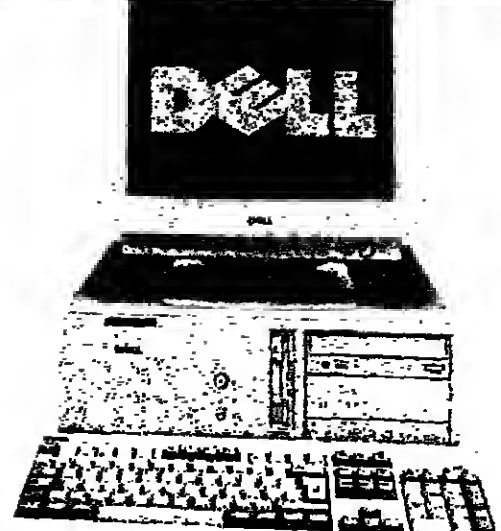
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news

Police bugging was a shambles

Steve Boggan

An inquiry into the control of police telephone taps has uncovered shambolic procedures that led to details of 900 bugging operations apparently going astray.

Detectives called in to investigate how a corrupt colleague gained access to secret phone transcripts for a criminal had to trace 396 officers from 35 forces to find out what had happened in secret records that should have been destroyed.

The National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS), which controls phone taps under the 1985 Interception of Communications Act, moved quickly yesterday to assure the public that all the records had now been accounted for, but it could do nothing to hide the apparent lapses in security over the most sensitive information available to police forces.

John Stevens, the former chief constable of Northumbria, was called in to investigate by NCIS in December 1995 after it emerged that lawyers acting for John Donald, a former South East Regional Crime Squad officer, had details of a phone tap on a criminal who was paying him, Donald, who should not have had access to the records, was subsequently jailed for 11 years for corruption.

Under intercepting legislation, senior officers are allowed to examine the transcripts of bugging operations and can make notes in take away in specially issued and logged notebooks which must be returned and destroyed at the end of investigations. However, when he began his inquiry, Mr Stevens found that around 900 notebooks had apparently not been returned. The only administrative system was a ledger that was woefully incomplete.

During a 12-month inquiry involving 12 Northumbria detectives, all the unaccounted for notebooks were either tracked down or "accounted for". Asked whether some of the notebooks were traced to detectives' offices, garages or bedrooms, one officer in the inquiry smiled and nodded.

Albert Pacey, the director-general of NCIS who called in Mr Stevens's team, said the inquiry had found no evidence that any information had been lost or that any investigations were compromised by the circulation of notebooks. "As a result of the lapse, Mr Stevens has made a large number of recommendations, all of which I have accepted," said Mr Pacey.

Mr Stevens, who examined Customs and Excise controls on phone taps as part of his inquiry, said: "We interviewed 396 serving or retired officers from 35 of the 43 forces and I am satisfied that all the original material has been accounted for. That does not mean that there are not photocopies about."

"I wish this had not happened," said Mr Pacey. "But at least I can reassure the public by pointing out that, as soon as we realised something was wrong, we called an outside force in to conduct an inquiry, we reported ourselves to the Parliamentary Commissioner and we alerted the media to show that we are fully accountable. Nothing was swept under the carpet."

"Now, with new safeguards in place, we are in the way, we will do our best to ensure there are no similar problems in the future."

Leading article, page 13



Back to the future: Nathan Chapman, 10, examining some of the produce at the Earth Balance site in Northumberland, which has been given official endorsement

Photograph: Ted Ditchburn

Britain's revolutionary farm of the future: earth, wind, water and sun

Stephen Goodwin
Heritage Correspondent

Britain's most ambitious green farming project, which its supporters claim is "a viable way to live in the 21st century", was yesterday given the stamp of official endorsement.

The scheme known as Earth Balance yesterday announced a £1.3m second phase, about half of which comes from public sources, which will harness wind, water and the sun as power sources for the 220-acre site

at Bedlington, Northumberland. The complex already includes a bakery and a brewery.

"What started as a fantasy is fast becoming a reality," said Steve Manchec, the project director. "We will show people a viable way to live in the 21st Century."

"We are not trying to create a theme park," said Mr Manchec, although eventually 85,000 visitors are expected to try the "hands-on" green technology and sample the home produce. "We are relatively

pragmatic, seeing whether it is possible to run businesses on sustainable lines without detracting from their commercial viability."

The largest slice of the money, almost £500,000, will come from English Partnerships, the state-funded development agency, Northumberland County Council and the EU Regional Development Fund are also key backers.

The project has a serious practical purpose. It is not trying to create an idyllic hippie commune, nor

a "green theme park" such as the futuristic Earth Centre planned for Doncaster. Drawing inspiration from the Centre for Alternative Technology in rural Wales, Mr Manchec and his co-founders hope to show how local economies can be revived on sustainable lines.

About £760,000 was spent on phase one, including a bakery, a horticultural training unit for people with learning difficulties and partial conversion of the farm to organic production.

The Green Man Bakery started trading last September with a capacity to produce 11,300 loaves or other bread products per week. By 1999 it should be using wheat from the farm and its ovens will be fired by wood from a willow coppice.

Barley grown on the farm will supply the Northumberland Brewery, currently trading off-site but due to move in the summer to a building taking electric power from a photovoltaic array on the roof.

Phase two includes a 60kw wind

turbine, linked to a 10 kw water turbine via a three-acre hydrostorage lake. The lake will provide a trout fishery while a reedbed system will convert sewage into compost.

In addition to its main operations, the farm also has three groups beaver away on their own ideas: re-cycling textiles and making small-scale wind turbines and kitchen furniture. By 1999 it is hoped the farm will directly employ 30 people - two at present - with another 60 jobs created indirectly.

... but the carrots may taste of prawn cocktail

Ian Burrell

Cheese-and-onion flavoured cauliflower and prawn-cocktail flavoured carrots are to be marketed in children to try to overcome their aversion to vegetables and help protect them from cancer.

Iceland, the frozen-food retailer announced the new range yesterday after Gordon McVie, director-general of the Cancer Research Campaign, made the suggestion in an

interview with the *Independent*. The CRC has agreed to endorse the products after it published research which showed many mothers have given up the battle of feeding their children vegetables.

Researchers at Strathclyde University found that in many homes Christmas dinner was the only meal when children were fed the recommended amount of vegetables. The report concluded that new approaches were needed to make chil-

dren more friendly towards vegetables. Forcing them to eat their greens did not work and nor did "cunning" ploys like smothering vegetables in sauce or gravy.

Malcolm Walker, Iceland's chief executive said: "It's technically very easy to flavour frozen vegetables. You can already buy minted frozen peas, for instance, and maybe that's something we should pick up on. While kids might not lead the ideal lifestyle, there could be an argument for say-

ing let's give in to it and make flavoured and fashionable vegetables. Whether it will sell or not, I don't know, but we will have a go."

Another idea was to brand and package vegetables in a more appealing way for children.

The research team interviewed nine groups of working-class women with children aged three to 16.

Children expressed an "arbitrary and despotic" dislike of vegetables, said Professor Hastings. They tend-

ed to "graze" rather than sit down in family meals and when set meal times were arranged they could be a stressful battleground. The findings showed that sweetcorn and baked beans are more acceptable to children than other types of vegetables, while soft greens like sprouts and cabbage are especially loathed.

Professor Hastings said health workers and retailers must join forces to alter the "cultural position" of vegetables.

But he accepted that to get children to eat the recommended five portions a day of vegetables and fruit was an "enormous task". Recent research for the Ministry of Agriculture showed that the UK's consumption of vegetables had decreased 30 per cent since 1970, while the trend for frozen food was increasing. Professor McVie said popping vitamin pills into the mouths of children is not the answer.

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LATIN7

Inmates moved from riot jail

Ian Burrell

Nearly 150 prisoners were yesterday removed from a high-security jail where prison riot squads fought to control a 12-hour rampage by inmates.

The unrest at Full Sutton prison, York, was finally quelled yesterday morning when the riot squads stormed barricades and seized back control of two wings where inmates had been running amok.

As a police helicopter soared overhead, more than 50 fire officers moved into the jail to extinguish a series of blazes which prisoners had lit during the night. Sources at the jail yesterday described scenes of "widespread devastation".

One officer said: "Corridors have been gutted by fire, they have smashed their windows out, offices have been wrecked and the TV rooms have been smashed up. It will take months to get back to normal."

The trouble, which started at 6pm on Monday when the prisoners were unlocked from cells for evening association, is be-

lieved to have started when two troublesome inmates were being segregated by jail staff.

One of the inmates shouted out what is believed to have been a signal to other prisoners to start the trouble. Within minutes the prisoners had taken control of the jail's B and C wings.

There had been tension in the jail for many weeks which may have been linked to a clamp-down on the use of drugs.

Earlier on Monday, staff told governors that a group of seven ringleaders were seeking to spark trouble in the jail.

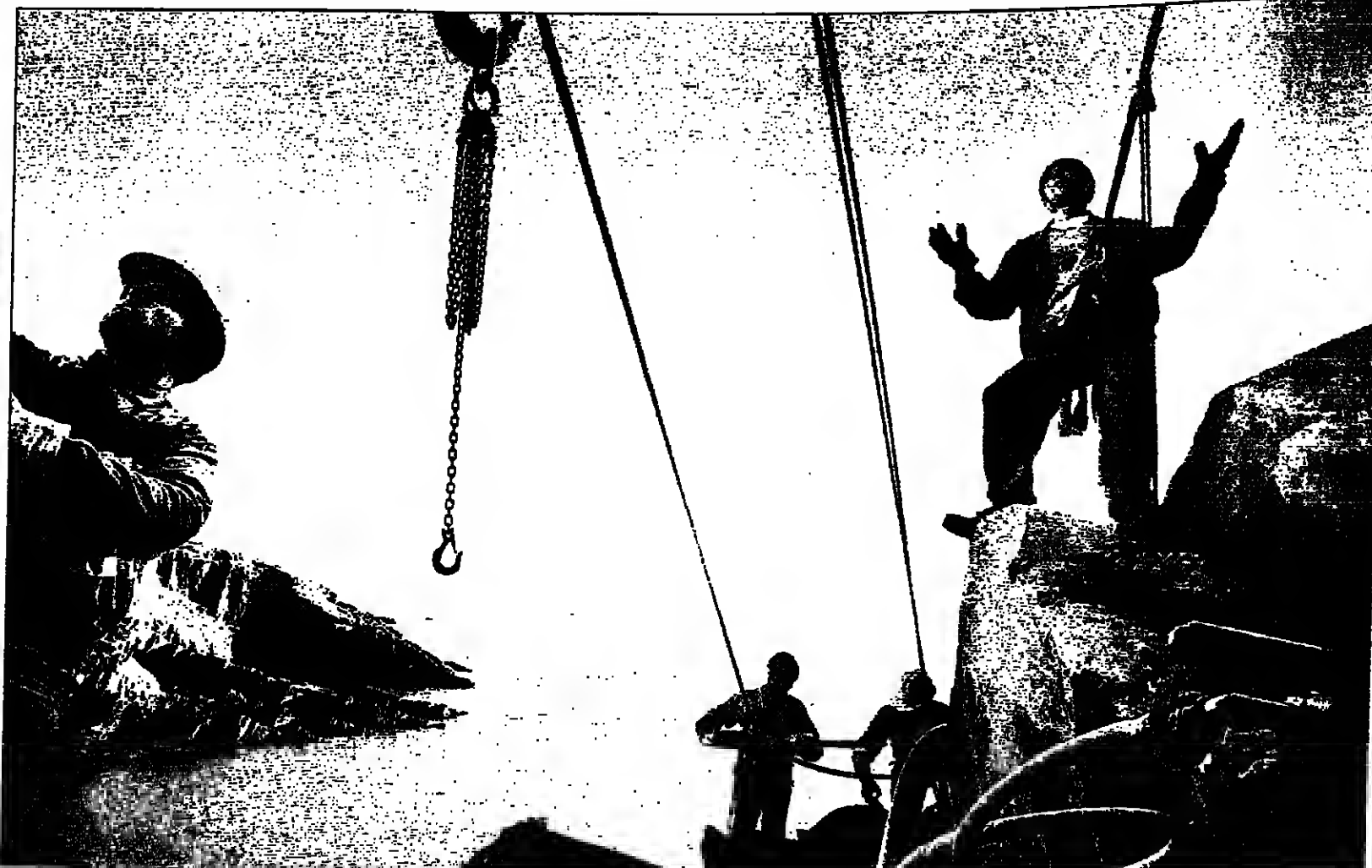
The prison service said the damage would cost around £500,000 to repair.

Yesterday 146 inmates were being transferred to jails in Manchester, Wakefield, Durham and elsewhere to limit the chance of further trouble at Full Sutton.

The transfers will add to the prison service's overcrowding problems, with the jail population at a record 60,000 and rising. The damage at Full Sutton will cause the loss of up to 200 places for high-security prisoners.



Test of dexterity: Quarry workers extracting sandstone from above St Bride's Bay in the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park where the quarry that supplied the original material to build St David's Cathedral north of the bay in the 12th century has been reopened to provide for the restoration of the west front (inset). Medieval methods of extraction are being used to avoid damage and pollution from blasting. Photographs: Rob Stratton



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Loyalists' place at table in jeopardy

David McKittrick
Ireland Correspondent

The Government yesterday issued a pointed public warning to loyalist groups that more violence would jeopardise the place at the conference table which is occupied by "fringe loyalist" parties.

The Northern Ireland Office said in a statement that violent attacks "inevitably raise questions" over the position of the Progressive Unionist party and Ulster Democratic party. The parties are seen as speaking for, respectively, the Ulster Volunteer Force and Ulster Defence Association, both of which are illegal paramilitary organisations.

The statement is seen as a response to Monday's boobytrap attack on a family in Larnie, Co Antrim. A hand grenade exploded underneath a van holding a Catholic couple and their five-month-old baby, but none of them was injured. The UVF has a significant presence in the town.

The NIO had received a barrage of criticism for its perceived reluctance to attribute two previous boobytrap attacks to loyalists, even though security sources held them responsible, and loyalists themselves privately admitted involvement.

Officially, the Government and the fringe parties maintain that the loyalist ceasefire is holding. But it is evident that the NIO has become increasingly worried about its public position, which was rendered highly uncomfortable following RUC Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan's acknowledgement that the first two bombs were planted by loyalists.

The NIO statement said: "The Government shares the increasing public concern that has arisen as the result of recent car-bomb attacks, the first two of which have been attributed by the Chief Constable to loyalist extremists. Those incidents, and possible that at Larnie yesterday, inevitably raise questions

over the position of the two parties associated with the loyalist paramilitaries."

It is open to participants in the political talks to raise the issue, and possibly seek the expulsion of the loyalists, during a plenary session to be held on Monday next. At the moment however the signs are that most parties are reluctant to press the issue.

The Ulster Unionist MP Ken Maginnis said his party would not seek their expulsion, saying there had been a significant contrast in the leadership being given by loyalist political spokesmen and the Sinn Féin leadership. But he added: "Obviously there could come a point when the weight of activity overrides that point of view."

Ian Paisley jun of the Democratic Unionist party said his party was waiting for the Government to take the initiative. He added: "Quite obviously the British government want everyone else to do their dirty work for them. We are saying to them 'You have the statements from the RUC, you bring forward the indictment'."

Relations between John Major and David Trimble were strained last night after the Ulster Unionist leader emerged without concessions from a meeting with the Prime Minister at his private room at the House of Commons, writes Colin Brown.

With the Ulster Unionists threatening to vote against the Government in a Commons vote last night, Mr Trimble's party appeared to be ready to assert its authority, holding the balance at Westminster.

Mr Trimble privately criticised the Northern Ireland Secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew, of inaction in the face of the collapsing ceasefire and the worsening security situation. He served notice that the places occupied by the Loyalists at the cross-party talks would be challenged on Monday.

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Bedlam as psychiatric services collapse

London runs out of beds as violence rises

Glenda Cooper

London is failing the mentally ill, with services near to collapse and unable to sustain the demands made on them, according to the most comprehensive study ever undertaken into mental health provision in the capital.

The capital is running out of beds, there are more acts of violence, more patients compulsorily detained and higher rates of admission than in any other part of the country, according to the King's Fund which produced the 300-page report.

It said that care in the community services are insufficient to cope with patients that do not qualify for secure beds. There are huge variations in residential care facilities across London and home treatment is available in only a few areas.

London has been at the cen-

tre of the debate over the treatment of the mentally ill with a succession of high-profile care-in-the-community failures – among them the schizophrenics Christopher Clunis and Stephen Lauder, who went on to kill. A government report last year listing authorities that could not provide comprehensive mental health services before 1997 was dominated by London boroughs.

Rates for psychosis in inner London are double those of other inner cities and the higher admission thresholds in London mean that patients who are not psychotic or have not been compulsorily detained are less likely to gain access to an acute bed than in other parts of the country.

The Secretary of State for Health, Stephen Dorrell, said he acknowledged that mental health services in London were under pressure, but said that the Government had already responded to the problems. "Mental health has for many years been the Cinderella service but in the last five years there has been a striking shift in priorities," he said. "The

funding formula has been changed to reflect the fact that there is a higher incidence of mental illness in London and consequently greater pressure on the services. We will keep the formula under review and if it can be demonstrated that it is not appropriately reflecting patient need then we will change it again."

But mental health charities said the report confirmed their worst fears and criticised ministers for not doing more to prevent the crisis. The charity Mind blamed the Government's "negligent" underfunding of community care for the "exceptionally difficult circumstances" in the capital.

"For years, Mind has been warning the Government that the failure to properly fund comprehensive community care would lead to a crisis," said Judi Clements, the charity's national director. "The failures highlighted by this report, and many others before, deserve a considered response from government, and not more knee-jerk reactions designed to boost opinion poll ratings."

Marjorie Wallace, chief executive of the charity Sane, called for a moratorium on bed closures. "It is disgraceful that seriously mentally ill people are either discharged too early or are not admitted to hospital for the care and treatment they need," she said. "Instead, they are being squeezed into hospital corridors... forcing psychiatrists to make intolerable choices."

The report said that delays in getting a bed were frequent, with the average wait for admission to a secure unit being 24 hours, and seven weeks for residential accommodation with 24-hour staffing. The voluntary sector is having to play a larger role in providing care in the community while high intensity 24-hour community services are almost entirely absent.

"The findings... describe a service in inner London that cannot be sustained because it is unable to meet the demands imposed on it," said the report.

"The crisis in inner London is not due to meanness among London's purchasers or to stick-in-the-mud attitudes among providers. The formulae for allocation resources to deprived inner city areas need to be revisited."

London's Mental Health, available from the George Godber bookshop at the King's Fund, 11-13 Cavendish Square, London, W1M 0AN price £15.



The human factor: Dr Mark Salter (left) with 'Pete', a patient for 10 years

Photograph: Brian Harris

'Schizbusters' in need of a miracle

"It's like a mad game of pass the parcel," says Mark Salter in exasperated tones as he looks at the list of cases. It is the beginning of another normal day as a consultant psychiatrist in Stoke Newington, north London, writes Glenda Cooper.

In the following eight hours his team deal with a torture victim, a violent schizophrenic and a man who believes he is paralysed.

Married with two children, Dr Salter, 37, has worked in the area for 10 years. His team of 20 has 1,700 cases on the books at any one time. "We are supposed to have all the answers but we need a miracle to do what we need to. My team does a great job but there is not adequate funding in London."

From 9.15am the stream of patients begins – success stories like Sara, 16, whose sassiness belies her drug problems, or Paul, a highly intelligent schizophrenic who has knuckled down to take his medication. They are followed by Hassan, a Turkish victim of torture suffering post-traumatic stress disorder after the deaths of his family, and Frank, whose mental problems are exacerbated by paedophilia tendencies.

Outside, aggressive twin brothers – both schizophrenics – have turned up to get their prescriptions. Dr Salter and their keyworker try to calm them down. It is 1pm and after a quick bite in a greasy spoon Dr Salter races out on community visits.

The first is a deluded Bengali woman who is convinced that people are using her flat as a brothel. The second stop is a gloomy flat with overflowing ashtrays and the stench of urine. Dr Salter is seeing Iain, who thinks he is paralysed down one side although he has nothing medically wrong with him. His partner Mary is an alcoholic who rarely moves from her bedroom.

The last case is John, a violent schizophrenic who may have stopped taking his medication. "What do we do?" Dr Salter says. "We have to respect people's rights – we can't just take people in for apparently no reason because we're worried. But then if we don't and he starts taking someone's face off with a crowbar, Joe Public will blame us and say we should have done something. All names and some details have been changed."

Royalists' place at stake in opardy

rick

The subject of the monarchy has been a hot topic in the past few days. The Queen's 50th birthday was celebrated with a series of events, including a royal garden party at Buckingham Palace. The Queen and Prince Charles were seen in the garden, surrounded by guests. The garden party was a success, with many guests enjoying the sun and the royal company.

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politics

Two more sincere champions could not be found for a more important debate. The passionate Europhobe, Teresa Gorman (Con, Billericay) had tabled a ten-minute rule Bill for a referendum to be held on our continuing membership of the EU. Denis MacShane (Lab, Rotherham), a long-standing advocate of closer ties with Europe, sought to oppose the motion. The result was hilarious.

Teresa opened so full of feeling on the subject of being ruled by foreigners, that her words couldn't emerge at the rate that her emotions demanded. They began to build up behind her teeth, weighing down on her

DAVID Aaronovitch

Swineherd and wench do battle over Europe

tongue and blocking her throat. Only with great difficulty did sentences emerge naturally or coherently.

But even when coherent these phrases were odd, suggesting that Ms Gorman exists in a parallel

dimension. When she met ordinary folk "in pubs, clubs and supermarkets" (I am looking forward to the MP who admits to meeting constituents in "bathrooms, brothels and betting-shops") they did not complain

about the health service ("they think it's splendid), or schools ("they're excellent), but about Europe. "The one question they all ask," she informed the House, "is when are you going to do something about Europe?" Until then I had believed Billericay was in Essex, but now know that it is somewhere between the Crab Nebula and the Klingon Empire. Her local butcher couldn't use his old chopping-board because of the Eurocrisis, the fish and chip shop had a sign saying "hands off British fish" and one member of the public had repudiated the euro, on the basis that he "didn't want a pocket full of bottle-tops". We all remember, she said, what

happened with decimalisation (hear, hear, yelled Congleton's Anne Winterton). With this clinching argument made, Ms Gorman sat down.

Time for a rare moment of parliamentary glory for Denis MacShane. I like Denis; he is clever and genial. And he is also desperate. His almost crippling desire to be in the big league shouts from his sharp suits and shrieks from the crisply folded hankie in his breast pocket. "Please, please, please, make me a shadow spokesthing!" it yells. And there is no answer.

It was Denis's awareness of his opponent's tenuous hold on things terrestrial, that led him

into terrible error - he decided to ridicule her. "The honourable lady is an adornment to the House," he scoffed, "we all love her!" Up till now (he went on) the Europhobes had had it all their own way. But, he warned, "the Iron Maiden of Truth will clamp around the farrago of half-truths and misleading phrases". I can only imagine that the erudite MacShane was quoting from an idiomatic Portuguese poem.

Worse followed. Ms Gorman was, he said, "a chirruping chimpanzee" behind whom stood "an organ-grinder with a deeper purpose". By now the press gallery (which is full of nature-lovers who know that chirrupy

things are small and fly - and that chimps are big and do not take to the air voluntarily) was falling about with mirth. The Labour benches, on the other hand, were stiff with mortification.

When the speeches were over, both sides realised that a tournament had been held - but that somehow, instead of Sir Wilfred of Ivanhoe wielding longsword for Saxon England and Brian de Bois Guilbert brandishing mace-and-chain for Norman chivalry, Wart the swineherd and Erta the bad-tempered serving wench from the great hall had put on the armour and entered the lists. They were not amused.

PRIME MINISTER'S QUESTIONS

SCORING THE EXCHANGES

John Major 2/10
Tony Blair 2/10

Major presented an NHS in a better state than ever as a result of being in Conservative hands for two thirds of its lifetime. Labour's criticisms were dismissed by Major as an insult to the service.

Blair argued that Labour built the NHS, which should be run again as a "proper co-operative service, not hospital against hospital, doctor against doctor, and the only party that will rebuild the NHS is the party that created it". Pointedly, both leaders only presented their stock image of the NHS.

THEMES OF THE DAY

Crisis in the NHS (every Labour question)

Labour's tax plans (every Conservative question but one)

The riot at Full Sutton prison (John Greenway, C, Ryedale)

Police (Sentencing) Bill defeat in Lords (Paddy Ashdown)

BLAIR'S ATTACK

Blair asked whether Major disputed hospital figures on children turned away from one hospital to seek intensive care at another. Major responded, in the light of the Shadow Chancellor's tight spending pledge on Monday, could Labour do any better without any extra money?

After briefly looking as though he would tighten the screw over children turned away from hospitals, Blair managed to broaden his questions so much that Major easily answered them with broad assertions of his own.

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Anger at new dial codes for 8 million

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Plans to change telephone dialling codes for 8 million households ran into controversy last night as British Telecom warned that it had reservations about aspects of the scheme.

Ofel, the industry watchdog, yesterday confirmed that from 2000 the dialling codes for London, Northern Ireland, Cardiff, Portsmouth and Southampton would change as part of a longer term shake-up of telephone numbers who could one day see the UK move from local to regional codes.

Don Cruickshank, the telecommunications regulator, insisted the changes would ultimately add billions of new numbers, enough to make the new system "future-proof". But BT complained that the new system went beyond Mr Cruickshank's original proposals, launched last summer, and would cause problems for customers.

Franklin Gothic

1912: The first automatic exchange opened in Epsom in Surrey.
1958: Trunk dialling around the UK introduced.
1966: Letters phased out - no more "Whitehall 1212" for Scotland Yard.
1978: Last manual exchange went out of service in Skye.
1990: London code changed from 01 to 071 and 081 for inner and outer London.
1995: Prefix 0 replaced by 01 in all dialling codes.

Labour's consumer affairs spokesman, Nigel Griffiths, said Mr Cruickshank should be suspended from office for going back on a firm pledge made before the last numbering changes in 1995. Quoting a BBC transcript from the edition of *Newsnight* broadcast on 6 March 1995, Mr Griffiths claimed Mr

Cruickshank had said: "Once we've put 1 in front of all the present numbers in the UK, no one who has such a number will have to change again during their lifetime."

Mr Griffiths said: "The failure to listen to experts, and the persistent denial of a further number change, makes the director-general's position virtually untenable."

The new system, prompted by a massive demand for phone numbers with the explosion of fax machines and e-mail addresses, replaces London's two dialling codes, 0171 and 0181 with a return to a single code for the whole city, 020. Existing seven-digit numbers will grow to eight digits.

The most radical alteration is for Northern Ireland, where after what Mr Cruickshank insisted had been full consultation a single code, 028, will be introduced. He said he had raised the option of a single code for Wales, but this had been rejected by local interest groups.

But it is the plan to merge the codes for Portsmouth and Southampton into 023 which concerned BT. Mr Cruickshank raises the radical prospect that other UK towns could switch to regional codes before 2010 if councils agree. It means calls from Portsmouth to Southampton, or vice-versa, will appear like local calls even though they are charged as trunk calls at higher rates.

A BT spokesman commented: "We were surprised by this. It wasn't part of the original consultation document. It could lead to confusion where customers are using local dialling to reach another city."

Mr Cruickshank refused to be drawn on the cost for business of the changes, but said estimates of £1bn were far too high. "The real cost would be if cities began to run out of numbers."

House of Chanel is a girl's best friend



Stepping out in style yesterday at the Ritz Hotel in Paris, two models display the latest haute couture creations from the house of Chanel. Security was even tighter than

usual at the show, as the company is launching a new line of jewellery in the spring. Tens of thousands of pounds worth of diamonds - including a near-



priceless jewel-encrusted comet choker worn by the Scottish model, Kirsty Hume - glittered among the featherlight chiffon, feathers and lace.

One model, pictured left, wore a revealing creation seemingly made out of thick, twisted white string. Galliano: the fashion king, page 14. Photographs: Ben Elmes/AFP

Drivers written off as failures

James Cusick

Half of Britain's motorists believe they would fail if they had to retake the new driving examination. The prospect of 13 million self-confessed failures driving around was revealed yesterday in a survey.

The annual Lex Report on Motoring, produced by the sales and leasing group, found that 81 per cent of drivers support the introduction of the new test, which incorporates a written test. However, although drivers are convinced the practical test still ensures the delivery of safe drivers, 59 per cent think they would fail the current test if they were forced to take it again.

It means that if the Government considered compulsory re-testing, the roads could face a big reduction in traffic while drivers brushed up their road knowledge. As part of the report, the Lex group asked respondents three questions from the written test. A quarter got all the questions wrong, 49 per cent got only one question wrong, and only 5 per cent got three correct.

With road-rage cases in the news, the report found that 36 per cent of motorists want the Government to concentrate on road-rage campaigns. The majority of drivers in the survey admitted to feelings of road rage. The Government yesterday confirmed plans to toughen laws for newly qualified drivers. John Bown, a transport minister, said that from 1 June new drivers will lose their full licence if they incur six penalty points within two years. At present drivers lose their licence if they clock up 12 penalty points over a three-year period.

Schools research 'is waste of money'

Judith Judd
Education Editor

Taxpayers are paying between £50m and £60m for education research that comes up with blindingly obvious results, Chris Woodhead, the chief inspector of schools said yesterday.

In his first speech since he was endorsed by Tony Blair, the Labour leader, Mr Woodhead, repeated his attacks on the education establishment which have led critics to accuse him of aligning himself with traditionalist right-wingers.

In a lecture to the Royal Geographical Society, Mr Woodhead had a message for Mr Blair: "The key responsibility facing the next government, whatever its political hue, is to ensure that the old orthodoxies and systems continue to be challenged."

A review of recent research, he said, revealed that "effective leadership" in school is usually "firm and purposeful" and that successful schools "are more likely to be calm rather than chaotic places".

And a £750,000 project last year came up with conclusions that pre-school children learn a lot if they are properly taught and that pupils make little progress in maths and science if they have failed to grasp the basic concepts.

"Do such blindingly obvious statements constitute a proper return for taxpayers' money?" he said.

He issued a strong warning against giving local authorities too much power to intervene in schools, in apparent contradiction of both Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education, and David Blunkett, her Labour shadow.

There was a danger that "the business of advice and support will become an industry and will begin to generate a new set of orthodoxies", he said.

But Professor Ted Wragg, of Exeter University's department of education, said: "Ofsted reports cost millions and they are full of banalities, many of which are uttered by Chris Woodhead. It is easy to pick off general conclusions to research projects which are full of detail."

Robin Squire, the schools' minister, said yesterday that the Government had no plans to change governing bodies' powers to decide the length of the school day.

His remarks run counter to reports that the Prime Minister wants proposals to lengthen the school day to form part of the manifesto. Labour said Mr Squire's announcement showed the confusion in the Government's education policy.

Witness 'out to get Grobbelaar'

The main prosecution witness in the trial of three footballers facing match-rigging charges told a court yesterday that part of his purpose in exposing the alleged malpractice was to destroy the former Liverpool goalkeeper Bruce Grobbelaar.

Christopher Vincent, a former friend and business associate, told Winchester Crown Court that he held Mr Grobbelaar heavily responsible, though not entirely responsible, for the failure of their safari business in Zimbabwe, and this was one of the reasons why he went in a newspaper with his allegations.

Cross-examined by Rodney Klevan QC, for Mr Grobbelaar, Mr Vincent agreed he stood to benefit financially from the outcome of the trial.

Asked if he was wholly objective, if he stood to gain financially, he said: "I think when I first reported the matter to the *Sun* newspaper I was not aware of the fact that it was going to trial, or that I would make any money from it."

Mr Klevan pointed out that

Mr Vincent went to the *Sun* and not to the police. Mr Vincent agreed he had known the newspaper might pay for what he had to say. Mr Klevan asked: "You were concerned first of all to make sure you were going to benefit financially by whatever you had to say. Is that right?"

Mr Vincent replied: "Correct." Mr Klevan asked: "If you could kill two birds with one stone, you would do so, to make financial profit for yourself and destroy Bruce Grobbelaar?"

Mr Vincent: "Correct, sir." Mr Klevan: "You had been his friend, but you were willing to sell the story and destroy him?"

Mr Vincent: "After events in Zimbabwe, yes, sir." Mr Grobbelaar, 39, the former Wimbledon players John Fashanu, 34, and Hans Segers, 35, and a Malaysian businessman, Heng Suan Lim, 31, deny conspiracy to give and accept corrupt payments. Mr Grobbelaar also denies another charge that he accepted £2,000 as an inducement to influence a match. The trial continues.

DAILY POEM

"When the hard North wind blows . . ."

By Rosalia de Castro, translated by Edwin Morgan

When wind is hard in the north
And fire leaps in the hearth
And they come through my door
Hungry, like skeletons in rage,
The cold freezes my spirit
As it splits their flesh apart.
And seeing them so comfortless
Shakes my very heart,
Takes it where desolation
And chains and darkness are.

A child, and already a stranger
To the habit of tears:
Misery dries the soul
And the need to weep;
A child, already old
In his gestures and deeds.
Beggars how you seize life!
Precocious as evil,
Implacable as hatred,
Hard as truth's teeth.

Rosalia de Castro (1838-1885), illegitimate daughter of a priest and an aristocrat, played a leading part in the 19th-century revival of the Galician language and culture of north-western Spain. This poem comes from Edwin Morgan's *Collected Translations* from many languages into both the English and Scots tongues (published by Carcanet).

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international

The EU years: A quarter of a century ago today, the UK signed up for the Common Market. So what has it done for us?

Twenty-five years of the European dream that have changed the face of Britain

How the birth of a vision has turned sour

It is 25 years since the signature of the British Treaty of Accession to the European Community, now called the EU.

As it happens, this was one of the rather rare moments in the chequered history of our relations with the EU when I was not physically present.

But I was very much there in spirit, having worked with Sir Pierson Dixon, the leader of the official delegation under Ted Heath in the first Brussels negotiations, and bitterly resented de Gaulle's veto in 1963.

During the 1960s I had become wholly convinced that British membership of the EC was essential for Britain and important for Europe.

So the signature of the Accession Treaty was a wonderful moment for me, followed within a couple of months by a call from the Foreign Office to tell me to return from Washington and become head of the (then only) European Integration



Sir Michael Butler, Labour's EU envoy, looks back on Britain's European adventure

Thatcher's initiative with the Treaty amendments agreed at Luxembourg in December 1985 in the Single European Act.

But alas, ever since John Major declared in 1992 – no doubt he meant it – that Britain's place must be at the heart of Europe, we have been sliding steadily on to the periphery.

Here we find ourselves in 1997, after 25 years of membership, with less understanding of the issues than we had 20 years ago.

The people of this country have been told by the so-called Euro-sceptics for the last five years that Germany and France are about to create a "federation", a government of the United States of Europe, which will result in Britain being abolished. A majority of them seem to believe this nonsense. I can assure readers that there are no Freemen who want to abolish France!

The Maastricht Treaty of 1992 is responsible for much of this. It is incomprehensible. It lays down a very high-risk and rushed route to Monetary Union – a route, incidentally, which may yet prove impractical for the EU to follow.

Though I may be being a little unfair, I blame John Major to some extent even for Maastricht. If he had not been so intent on securing opt-outs from EMU and the Social Chapters he could have deployed his persuasive and negotiating skills to improving the substance.

Things have now got even worse. Having negligently allowed the BSE crisis to happen, the Cabinet, terrified by the Euro-sceptics, tried "non-cooperation" i.e. vetoing things we were in favour of.

Not surprisingly, this did not work. We have also taken an ideological and negative line in the IGC designed to prepare for enlargement.

The consequence of this appeasing our ill-informed Euro-sceptics has thus been to reduce our influence to the lowest point ever. It is time for a fresh start.



Du pain, du vin, du Boursin

Tony Barber
Europe Editor

Need some nappies? Or do you need to brush up your Dutch, Finnish or Portuguese? You could kill both birds with one stone these days, because the labelling on the packet will usually be in five or six European languages as well as English.

The same is true for all sorts of food, clothes, toys and other products such as computers, televisions and cameras whose instruction leaflets are in French, German, Italian and Spanish as well as English. The basics of shopping may not have changed enormously from 1972 to 1997, but the experience certainly feels more European.

Many, probably most Britons still carry the still-backed black passport that was standard issue 25 years ago. However, it has become increasingly common in recent years to see the smaller, flexible, neon-coloured European-style British passport whipped out at passenger control points.

The newer passport, marked European Community on its cover and first page, does not transform a Briton into a "citizen of Europe" in any legal sense. But according to those who possess one, it alters one's sense of identity – by broadening it rather than by diluting it.

Remember the old television advertisement of about 25 years ago that went "Beanz Meanz Heinz"? Today's equivalent is surely the one that goes "Du pain, du vin, du Boursin".

Commercials have been Europeanised, to the point where a few do not even bother to make their point in English. Sensual French actresses, majestic Italian music and romantic German scenery sends the message that Europe is sophisticated and so its products must be, too. Subliminally, such adverts are perhaps telling us something else: that Europe is home.

Tastes in food and drink have shifted noticeably in a European direction. Britons drink more wine, more Continental-style

lager, more cappuccino, more espresso. All sorts of cheeses, sausage, cold meats and pasta are found on British plates that would not have been there 25 years ago. Cities all over the country have restaurants, bars and cafés with European names. Quite a few have been opened by businessmen and restaurateurs from the Continent. Even in simple places, menus are set out in French, Italian or Spanish as well as English in a way difficult to imagine in 1972.

Perhaps the biggest change of all: Britain is physically linked to the Continent through the Channel Tunnel. Travelling to the Continent, or at least the nearest bits such as northern France, Paris and Brussels, has been revolutionised by Le Shuttle and Eurostar.

Equally important is the flow of people in the other direction – it is much easier and quicker for other Europeans to get to London and the rest of Britain. In 1972, the old joke about "Fog in Channel: Continent Cut Off" could still be told. Not now.

Is life better or worse since we joined the Union?

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

Has a quarter century of EU membership been good for the UK economy? The question is impossible to answer without knowing what would have happened otherwise. Still, there are some useful indicators of the UK's progress.

Trade with other EU countries has become more important over the years. In 1973 the rest of the EEC – as it then was – accounted for 42 per cent of the value of British exports. By 1995 that share had risen to 58 per cent. The importance of our European partners is even more pronounced in trade in manufactured products, where they take 64 per cent of UK exports.

Investment by European companies has grown significantly. Although the United States still dominates the league table of investors, it is followed by the Netherlands, France and Germany. The value of investments in the UK by EU companies, having doubled in the first 15 years of membership, has risen from £23.6bn at the end of 1988 to £46.1bn at the end of last year.

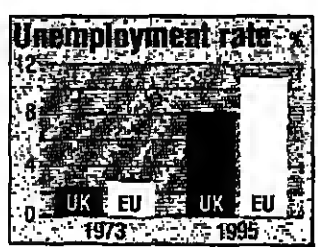
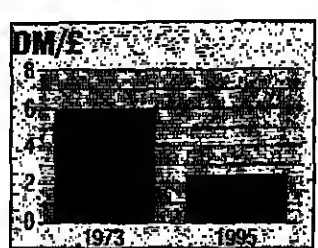
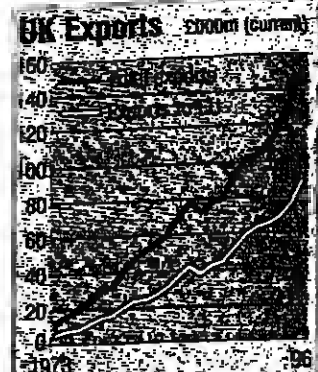
On broader economic measures, the UK's progress has been less obvious. GDP per head has grown more slowly, from a shade above the European average in 1973, to about 8 per cent below average today.

On that classic economic indicator, the strength of the currency, the pound has fared very badly. Despite its recent gains, £1 will buy only 2.7 German marks today, compared with DM6 in 1973.

On the other hand, the flexibility of its labour market means that the UK, unlike the Continental economies, has created new jobs in the private sector during the past decade. UK unemployment was a little below the European average in 1973. Last year it was well below the climbing Euro-rate.

Britain first applied to join the European Union (then the European Communities) as long ago as 1961. But the French, and in particular President Charles de Gaulle, concerned that the British would wreck the whole thing, vetoed the British application after a year of negotiations. Britain had earlier set up the European Free Trade Association in 1960, with other non-EU members. However, it proved an inadequate substitute for membership of the real thing.

Another British application followed in 1967; but so did another French veto. After de Gaulle left power in 1969, progress was made, and in 1970 the EC invited Britain to resume negotiations to join. In 1972 the



accession negotiations were finalised. That meant that the terms and conditions under which Britain was to be a member were agreed between London and the six existing members.

Membership followed on 1 January 1973. With Ireland and Denmark also joining, that took membership to nine. Norway concluded accession negotiations at the same time, but then decided (after a referendum) not to join.

Britain later held a referendum after criticism from the left of the Labour Party. The first referendum in British history, on June 5 1975, showed 67.2 per cent of voters in favour of membership; only Shetland and the Hebrides were against.

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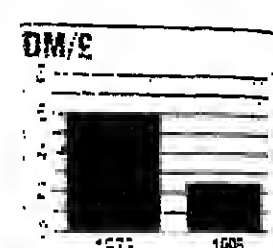
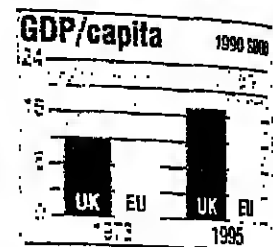
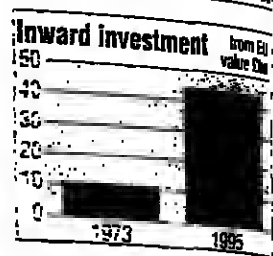
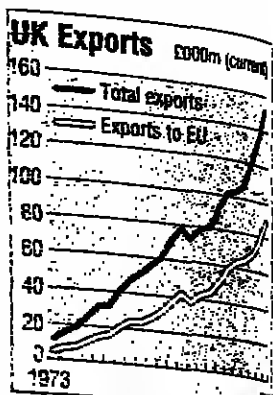


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Gay call to boycott wine from Romania

Adrian Bridge
Central Europe Correspondent

The UK gay rights group OutRage! is today calling for an international boycott of Romanian wine in protest against what are currently the harshest anti-homosexual laws in Europe.

The move comes just three months after OutRage! activists disrupted a Romanian National Opera performance at the Royal Albert Hall in London by unravelling a huge banner with the slogan: "Romania - stop jailing queers".

Peter Tatchell, OutRage!'s most famous campaigner, said: "We are hoping that it won't just be gay people supporting this boycott but everybody who is concerned about human rights."

"Romania is now the only country in Europe (that still outlaws) male and female homosexuality."

Under a newly modified law, homosexual relations between consenting adults in Romania are punishable with up to five years' jail if they are conducted in public or if they are deemed to have caused a "public scandal".

The law represents a relaxation of the harsher legislation in force under the communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu but when it was passed last year it was immediately condemned by OutRage! and the human rights organisation Amnesty International as still being way out of line with West- and even East-European norms.

"The term 'public scandal' ... could still be used to imprison consenting adults," Ivan Fischer, an Amnesty spokesman, said. "Under this law anyone could go

to the police and claim to be 'scandalised' by ... the effeminate behaviour of a neighbour."

The new law also makes it an offence for homosexuals to form their own associations or engage in acts of "propaganda" or "proselytising" - effectively banning their clubs, bars, newspapers or any other form of support.

According to Mr Tatchell, the law is in flagrant breach of Romania's promise to decriminalise homosexuality following its accession to the Council of Europe in 1993 and is a serious obstacle to its ambition to join the European Union.

Hopes for a genuine liberalisation of the law were raised in November when Emil Constantinescu was elected as president. He once promised to repeal the current legislation; in office, however, he has not chosen to push the issue.

Indeed, rather than liberalising the law, there are many in the country who would like to see a return to the Ceausescu-era legislation. Romania's powerful Orthodox church has organised mass petitions calling for the return of the blanket ban on homosexual practices, which it condemns as "the tyranny of selfish, barren passion".

Many of Mr Constantinescu's political allies in the governing Peasant Party also take a hard line. In last year's debates on the law, the Peasant Party MP Emil Popescu said that "incest is preferable to homosexuality," because it "gives breeding a chance". Horia Pascu, a party colleague, claimed that homosexuality was unknown in the animal world, except among ducks, "which are known to be the most stupid among birds".



Flames of fury: A firefighter in the Dandenong mountains near Melbourne, Australia, where thousands of people are trying to contain bush fires. At least one person has been killed, 44 houses destroyed and hundreds of people forced to leave their homes. Photograph: Reuters

Italian farmers go sour on Europe

Andrew Gumbel
Rome

After living a fairy-tale life of subsidies and cosy government protection for the past 15 years, Italy's dairy farmers have suddenly come face-to-face with the reality of European integration - and they don't like it one bit.

Since 1982 they have been ignoring milk-production quotas imposed by the EU and getting Rome to pick up the tab for fines they incur. But with monetary union just around the corner and Italy desperate to clean up its act so it can join the single currency on time, the tables have turned against them.

A few days ago the country's 105,000 farmers were told they would have to pay their own fines for 1996 - some 370bn lire (£150m) - and would be expected

to stick to European production limits. The result has been a revolt, with tractors out on the roads and farmers threatening a French-style blockade of Italy's main cities. In Milan, the tractors have cut off access to Linate airport, forcing passengers to drag their luggage several hundred metres on foot.

Much of the anger has focused on the same government that bailed the farmers out for years. Umberto Bossi's Northern League has muscled in on the act, portraying the stand-off as a conflict between honest farmers and heartless bureaucrats, as has the far-right opposition National Alliance.

The saga stretches back to 1982, when Rome first fell out with the European Commission on milk production. The Commission, seeking to curb overproduction, set one quota and Rome,

worried about its dwindling agricultural sector, unilaterally set another - thus sparking a "milk war" that lasted more than 10 years.

Periodically there were attempts to resolve the crisis, but the result was always an excess of Italian milk production and a flurry of fines that the government invariably chose to pay itself. It was an unrealistic situation, but one that the farmers became comfortable with.

As the commentator Giorgio Bocca wrote this week: "Farmers got the idea that the European Community was itself one enormous cow for the milking."

Since the protests began last week, the centre-left government led by Romano Prodi has been pulled in both directions at once.

It is desperate to clear one of the worst blots in its European copybook and re-

lieve the public finances of a burden it can no longer afford. But the last thing it wants at a time of Maastricht-imposed austerity is a widespread outpouring of anti-European bile.

Its answer has thus been to plead in Brussels on the farmers' behalf. Yesterday the Agriculture Minister, Michele Pinto, asked his European partners for a more generous quota, pointing out that under the present regime Italy would have to import more than 40 per cent of its milk. Today Mr Prodi will meet the farmers to explain the sudden reverse in their fortunes. The farmers themselves, though, are in no mood to be fobbed off with lessons in the hard economic truth. Yesterday the tractors were still out at Linate and more protests have been threatened if they do not quickly get their way.

French railways take new track

Mary Dejevsky
Paris

After months of hesitation, the French government has finally plucked up the courage to start overhauling the country's technically pioneering, but heavily loss-making, state railway company, SNCF. The project, however, is far less ambitious than was envisaged 18 months ago and leaves SNCF with its public status and monopoly unquestioned, at least for the time being.

Under a bill presented to parliament yesterday, the company is to be split into two: Réseau Ferré National (RFN), a state-owned version of the British Railtrack, will own and take responsibility for the track and infrastructure, and a revamped SNCF will be responsible for running and managing the trains.

RFN will take over the bulk of SNCF's debt to the tune of 134 billion francs, and receive a government subsidy of FR8bn in the first year to offset interest payments. SNCF will have to pay RFN for the use of the track, while RFN will have to pay SNCF for managing it.

Six "volunteer" regions are to take over the running of local railway services on an experimental - and "fully reversible" - basis.

The railways bill, in approximately its present form, was to have been presented in October, but was delayed without explanation amid reports that officials judged the industrial climate too volatile. In autumn 1995, train drivers brought the national rail network to a halt and spearheaded six weeks of public sector protest that immobilised the country and threatened to topple the government.

That the government has now presented the bill - albeit starting with the upper house (the Senate), which is a "safer" bet for its first reading than the National Assembly - is a sign of its confidence that the sting of trade union protest might now have been drawn.

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Lines of argument: A traffic policeman separating nuns and riot police in Seoul yesterday during a rally against the new labour laws. The nuns were joined by hundreds of priests and Buddhist monks. Below, President Kim greeting the opposition party leader Kim Dae Jung before their talks on ending the strikes. Photographs: Reuters/AP

Koreans strike blow for workers' rights

Richard Lloyd Parry
Seoul

In a sudden and uncharacteristic submission to popular pressure, the South Korean President, Kim Young Sam, agreed yesterday to reconsider controversial labour laws which have provoked a month of nationwide strikes.

During a meeting at the presidential Blue House, Mr Kim told opposition leaders that the National Assembly would be allowed to rewrite the laws, which postpone the right of workers to form free trade unions, and make it easier for companies to lay them off.

Also subject to revision will be amendments to the national security law giving new powers to the Korean intelligence agency.

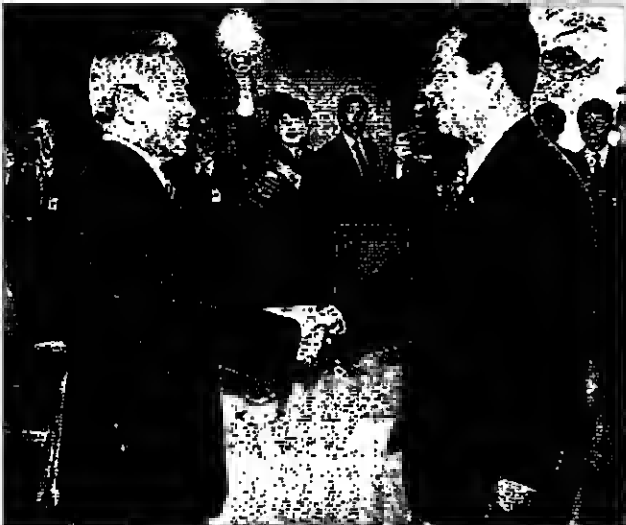
The President promised that trade union leaders, who are wanted by police for organising the strikes, will not be seized

from their sanctuary in Seoul's Roman Catholic cathedral.

Kim Dae Jung, head of the chief opposition party, the National Council for New Politics, said: "Today's meeting was not a total solution but there was some advance. President Kim Young Sam showed an attitude of wanting to solve the problems together with opposition parties."

The announcement represents an unexpected U-turn for the government, which appeared to have been gaining the upper hand in the month-long dispute.

After a patchy response to a general strike call last week, the leaders of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) announced last Saturday that they would limit their action to one day a week, with an all-out strike planned for next month if the government fails to give in to their demands.



But in the face of dismal popularity ratings, intensifying international pressure and mounting damage to industry, Mr Kim appears to have decided to cut his losses.

The President's about-turn

occurred on the eve of a meeting in Paris today of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), a grouping of rich nations which South Korea joined last December. The OECD re-

quires entrants to recognise the right of workers to form trade unions, and yesterday's announcement will take the edge off growing criticism among other member governments.

But the battle is by no means over; both the KCTU and the officially sanctioned Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU) were dismissive of yesterday's announcement and promised to keep pressure up until the labour law is completely withdrawn.

"We are very disappointed," the KCTU secretary-general Kwon Young Kil said. "The talks today have not solved any of the basic problems, and are far from what the Korean people demanded."

A spokesman for the smaller opposition party, the United Liberal Democrats, predicted a "complete breakdown" in discussions on the dispute. "The President showed that there is

a huge gulf between us in the way he interprets the current situation, and he was not sincere at all," Ahn Baek Soo said.

The strikes are already estimated to have cost more than \$3bn (£1.8bn) in lost production, and resolving them will not become any easier for the government over the next few weeks.

When the university term begins again next month, there are likely to be new protests from Korea's highly active student population against the new national security law, which was drafted in response to left-wing protests on campuses last summer.

Next March, union discontent will find a new focus in the annual round of spring wage negotiations. President Kim's single five-year term expires at the end of this year, and the competition is already gathering among members of his party to succeed him after elections next December.

Critics lash out at 'fascist' HK laws

Stephen Vines
Hong Kong

China is facing an unprecedented barrage of criticism over plans to repeal human rights laws in Hong Kong following the transfer of sovereignty on 1 July.

Chinese officials were taken aback by the storm of protest which erupted this week because much of it came from supporters who rarely publicise their misgivings about Chinese policy.

Moreover, the government in Peking and its advisers believed they had already laid the ground for plans to neuter the Bill of Rights and reintroduce some antiquated colonial legislation which imposes curbs on the freedom of assembly and the right to form associations.

For the first time in many years nearly all newspapers in the colony, most of which have become increasingly supine in their coverage of Chinese policy, have come out strongly against the planned changes. The Chinese language *Express News*, for example, warned China against reimposing "fascist laws".

In another commentary, the pro-Peking *Sing Pao* newspaper said that the law reform proposals, which come from a Chinese advisory committee with Hong Kong members, posed a test of leadership for Tung Chee-hwa, who will head the first post-colonial government. It stated that the changes were against the will of the people of Hong Kong and that Mr Tung should therefore pay attention to these views - rather than those of advisers who wanted to turn back the clock on human rights legislation.

The law reform proposals are part of a wider exercise designed to identify and abolish laws with a colonial tinge and remove legislation seen as contradicting the Basic Law, the mini-constitution for the new Hong Kong.

The exercise has been so thoroughgoing that China is even proposing to scrap legislation which brought Hong Kong onto the Gregorian calendar system, as opposed to the Julian system which ceased

to be used in Britain in 1752. The Gregorian calendar was adopted because it was more accurate than the Julian calendar. This piece of legal amendment seems to be more a product of over zealous action to purge laws regarded as colonial, rather than a politically motivated move.

Although the proposed changes in the law have not been endorsed by any decision-making body they have already been endorsed by senior Chinese officials. Chen Zuo'er, one of China's negotiators with Britain over Hong Kong transitional matters, said that the changes would put "history back on the right track".

A Chinese foreign ministry spokesman said yesterday that as the Hong Kong government had made unilateral changes to laws which would be in force following the handover of power, it was necessary to bring these laws back into line. Ultimately the new laws will have to be presented to a new legislature which has been virtually hand-picked by China. Nevertheless some of its members have expressed unease about the changes.

Liu Yiu-chu, a lawyer, and a member of China's National People's Congress, questioned why it was proposed to bring back oppressive public order laws which had been abolished by the Legislative Council. She said that these proposals would damage Hong Kong's image overseas.

The Governor Chris Patten, described the changes as striking "at the heart of Hong Kong liberties". Britain will be making a formal protest.

Although the recommendations cover the scrapping of 16 laws and the amendment of 9 others, some recent changes to Hong Kong law have remained unscathed. Pro-Peking supporters in the rural areas are furious that the new law giving women land-inheritance rights has not been abolished.

The Legislative Council, which, along with all organs of elected government, will be scrapped under the proposals, will meet on Friday to consider its response.

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Yeltsin illness 'a threat to Russia', warns aide

Phil Reeves
Moscow

Anatoly Chubais, Boris Yeltsin's chief-of-staff, has admitted in a rare interview that the President's illness is threatening the stability of Russia.

Mr Chubais, Russia's most powerful official, made little attempt to play down Mr Yeltsin's condition during a lengthy interview in the *Trud* (Labour) newspaper, published yesterday.

The aide, whom many believe is running the government, did not suggest Mr Yeltsin should stand down. But he confirmed that a facsimile presidential signature is being used for many documents, although not for presidential decrees.

"It does make things more complicated, both in terms of day-to-day work and in terms of undermining stability in the country as a whole," he said.

Mr Chubais stressed that no key government decisions had been postponed, and that, unlike last year, there has been no damaging infighting at the top. Mr Chubais, considered a pro-Western reformer, attacked the *West* for seeking to throw a "coron sanitaire" around Russia, from Azerbaijan to the Baltics, through Nato expansion.

His comments will add to the growing sentiment in Russia that the time may be approaching when Mr Yeltsin will be forced to retire. Yesterday, the respected *Nazavistimay* Gazette

said the political establishment was looking for a successor.

"Both the opposition and Yeltsin's supporters have clearly demonstrated their alienation from the President", said the newspaper, noting that when Mr Yeltsin was in hospital, a clutch of his ministers and officials, including the Prime Minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, went on leave. Doubts about Mr Yeltsin's comeback after months of illness deepened two weeks ago when he was admitted to hospital with pneumonia.

The President returned to his residence outside Moscow on Monday, but his aides have fought shy of predicting when he would return to full-time work in the Kremlin.

Gingrich fined \$300,000 for 'political jaywalking'

Rupert Cornwell
Washington

The US House of Representatives yesterday moved to wrap up a wrenching two-year investigation of Newt Gingrich by imposing punishment - unprecedented for a Speaker - of an official reprimand and a \$300,000 (£180,000) fine for violating its ethics rules and then misleading the Congressional committee investigating his case.

Thus has been struck, after a perfunctory debate which Mr Gingrich did not attend, a weary peace between Democrats demanding that the Speaker step down, and his Republican colleagues who maintained his offences were trivial: "political

jaywalking" in the words of one key supporter.

Yesterday's vote came after the publication of a report by the House Ethics Committee, which found that Mr Gingrich "over a number of years and in a number of situations" had breached the normal boundaries of congressional conduct - most recently by using tax-exempt funds for financing a highly partisan college course, and then providing the committee with wrong information.

Just before Christmas, a chastened Mr Gingrich admitted wrongdoing.

In essence, he struck a deal with the Committee by accepting a reprimand, a sanction that allows him to become the

first Republican in 68 years to serve a second consecutive two-year term in the Speaker's chair.

But controversy, and uncertainty over his future, could easily resurface if the Speaker takes the advice of some of his followers, and tries to pay the fine with unused campaign funds instead of from his own pocket.

Alternatively, the tax authorities may choose to press charges for wrongful use of tax-exempt funds.

With many Republicans already highly uneasy about having voted to re-elect him on 7 January, either development could prove fatal for Mr Gingrich.

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صكا من الامل

Clinton's mood music spreads harmony

The American presidency is best understood, according to Theodore Roosevelt, as a "bully pulpit". Roosevelt could be a plain, straightforward bully – he ordered the bombardment of Havana, for instance. But by bully pulpit, he meant that the American president leads most effectively by reflecting back to the American people their better selves. That was also, in essence, the project of another Roosevelt, Franklin, who projected an America which could advance only by putting its faith in government. Then the tide turned and another kind of preaching became popular in the White House, as Reagan and Bush, rhetorical advocates of stern self-reliance, tried to repeal FDR's New Deal-based state.

And now, after his second inaugural speech from the steps of the Capitol this week, does Bill Clinton fit in – a man whose better self has from time to time been hard to make out in the mud-flinging of Nineties Washington? He did something remarkable. He declared that conflict between statist and anti-statists, the 20th-century battle of the bully pulpits, to be over. We have, he said, resolved a great debate over the role of government. Clinton used his great platform to express a moderate sense of the limits on government action and of government's continuing vitality – government strong enough to give us the tools to solve our problems

for ourselves, as the president put it. Inaugural speeches are not summaries of policy. This was not even a statement of legislative intent. It was mood music. Yet, addressed to Americans as it was, President Clinton's speech also matters to us, on this side of the Atlantic.

The trivial reason is that one way or another our culture and horizons are formed by the domestic condition of the United States. There is another reason, germane this week as the contents of Gordon Brown's extraordinary fiscal promises are digested. Bill Clinton is an inescapable point of reference in the map of possible futures for the centre left or progressive politics in this country. What he has done, and may yet do, are possible compass-points for our Labour and Liberal Democrat parties.

Let's put on one side Whitewater, Paula Jones and the sleaze which clings to this president like drying slime to an Everglades gator. What Governor Bill Clinton may or may not have done in hotel rooms in the state capital of Arkansas is irrelevant to his conduct as President, or at least no more relevant than if one tried to judge Harry Truman's actions during the Korean war in the light of his conduct as a Missouri judge. The American people voted Clinton back, unseen "distinguishing characteristics" and all.

That does not mean the slate is clean.



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Clinton's domestic accomplishments during his first term are not negligible, though they owe a great deal to fortuitous economic circumstances and generally good judgements by the chairman of the Federal Reserve. But the omissions are equally great: conspicuous failure to deal with the costs of ageing; the abandonment of health reform; the incarceration of a growing proportion of the youth, and specifically young blacks, without commensurate effect on crime.

For all that, the President's second-term inaugural is a speech worth hearing with open ears. To British listeners,

a phrase such as "the great natural bounty of our water, air and majestic land" is bombast. What they ought to hear is the recapitulation by William Jefferson Clinton of the second president's sense of a new continental power, unbounded in time and unconstrained by geography, destined for greatness.

This style of speech-making is alien to us in our cramped island, especially the way a US president can reach out to all his fellow countrypeople on the basis of common aspiration – for ultimately, perhaps, the only thing that Americans have in common is an idea

of onwads and upwards towards Jeffersonian goals of happiness.

Yet isn't that basic political optimism what will always distinguish the political centre and left from the right – a conviction that government has a role to play in securing for individuals and for groups the means for advancement? The political trick, in this post-New Deal era, is to create a kind of government action that does not involve more spending or more officials or even more law-making.

In a world where the pressures are for slightly smaller states, that is essential. But it is practical too? Three themes – fairness, inclusiveness and renewal – sang through Clinton's speech. These are aspirations; but they are richly suggestive. What Clinton is saying is that government has a role – in the lives of both individuals and their civil society – as a source and guarantor of fairness and inclusiveness. The job of the party of the centre left is to win power in order to make the conditions of life fairer. To be an American, in the Clinton perspective, is to resent and, by implication, seek to demolish those structures that exclude people. The party of the centre left is thus the party of equal access, women's advancement, intolerant of racial discrimination, striving to enact policies (welfare to work, child benefit, education, etc) that emancipate the underclass.

This is a new politics of values,

which is harder-edged than mere talk or blather. It is a new bully pulpit, with a social mission attached. And it is inspiring – at least to us. It is a reminder to all those who have assumed that Gordon Brown is in some way the gravedigger of progressive British politics that there are other ways of being "progressive" than simply tax-raising or big-spending. For the centre left generally, as for the scandal-hit but re-elected William Jefferson Clinton, there is political life after death.

Ban sprouts, and kids will eat them

It sounds like a master-stroke. Unable to persuade the nation's grumpy youth to swallow frozen vegetables, one store has come up with a new gimmick. Watch out for cheese-and-onion-flavoured cauliflower and prawn-cocktail-flavoured carrots. But hang on a minute. Can picky infant eating habits really be solved simply by dressing gruesome greens up as crisps? If it were as easy as that, weary parents would have cottoned on decades ago by drenching vegetables in one of the most popular crisp flavours of all – good old salt and vinegar. We have a horrible feeling that the only way to persuade young people to turn to vegetables is to ban them.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

UN closure of camp betrays refugee rights

Sir: In defiance of the growing chorus of international criticism by human rights and aid organisations, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) plans to shut down the Atrush refugee camp in south Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

Atrush is no ordinary camp. It is the only sanctuary for approximately 15,000 Kurds from north Kurdistan (south-east Turkey) who fled the destruction of their villages and torture and brutal persecution carried out by Turkish soldiers and gendarmes.

The closure of this camp, which has an internationally recognised status, by the High Commissioner for Refugees is tantamount to denying these refugees the minimum internationally recognised humanitarian standards of treatment. It also betrays a callous contempt for human rights.

This policy is in stark and revealing contrast to that pursued by the United States and the United Nations last year, when 7,500 Kurds and their families who worked with the operation Provide Comfort were hastily evacuated via Guam to the US, to protect them from possible reprisals by Saddam Hussein's regime.

But for the Kurds from Turkey, new standards and different criteria apply. 15,000 Kurdish refugees are now quietly and expeditiously sacrificed to suit Turkey's barbaric aims, with the apparent approval of the UNHCR following Ankara's intervention in Washington. We appeal to the UNHCR to immediately stop its plan to close the camp.

Lord AVEBURY
Chairman, Parliamentary Human Rights Group
Lord REA
Lord McNAIR
Baroness GOULD
Lord HYLTON
JOHN AUSTIN-WALKER MP
(Woodwich, Lab)
TONY BANKS MP
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Refugee Adviser for Cardinal Hume
JOHN JOSSET
Policy Officer for Refugees, Catholic Bishops Conference England and Wales
Peace in Kurdistan campaign
London NW3



Read his lips: no fair taxes

Sir: As a higher-rate taxpayer, and by no means a left-winger, I am appalled at Gordon Brown's commitment not to increase standard and higher rates of income tax ("No new taxes? Read his lips", 21 January).

One of my hopes for a change of government, any change, had been for a reversal of the socially divisive and regressive tax system of recent years. In particular I had looked forward to a shift, even if the total tax burden was left unchanged, from indirect to direct taxation.

By not taking account of anyone's ability to pay, VAT hits the poor more than the better-off. And corporation tax is very low by international standards. Unless spending is to be cut by unacceptable amounts, direct taxes must be increased and VAT reduced.

FMM STEINER
Deddington, Oxfordshire

Sir: The term "windfall tax on the utility companies," to describe a supposedly painless way of raising revenue by a Labour government, is a misnomer. Its name should be the Utility Customer Tax because the companies, to maintain their investment programmes and dividends, will eventually pass on "windfall tax" bills to customers.

GRAHAM ARMSTRONG
Pity Me, Durham

Sir: Polly Toynbee ("Why I trust Jack Straw to do the right thing", 20 January) tells us we need not fear Jack Straw's illiberal statements because he doesn't mean a word of them. "Trust him – he's a liar." It's a novel idea. An alternative suggests

itself: why shouldn't I trust the fellows whose stance, being well to the left of new Labour, is now closer to my own? Blairites assume the left need not be placated because it has nowhere to go. I am a lifelong Labour voter and the likes of Straw, Harman and, above all, Blair have ensured that my impending choice is between voting Liberal Democrat and abstaining.

SHEENAGH PUGH
Cardiff

We don't need a Halifax Bank

Sir: In common with many households, we received some hefty literature giving details about the proposed conversion of the Halifax Building Society into a bank. I say "we" although it was solely addressed to my husband, even though we have always had joint accounts. The Halifax presumably does not consider women fiscally competent.

I did attempt to read this document, which seems more concerned about share allocation than the arguments for conversion. I searched in vain for a section putting a contrary view. There was none, yet there are compelling arguments against conversion. To keep shareholders sweet the cost of borrowing will go up and the rates of return on savings will go down.

Building societies were established to enable people to buy their own homes – not for people to make a financial killing. There is not exactly a shortage of banks in most high streets (although rural areas might appreciate the odd one).

GILLIAN BERG
Luton, Bedfordshire

BBC tuned in to local radio

Sir: Polly Toynbee ("Local radio? Why not news from your own street", 15 January) is quite right about there being space on the dial for intelligent, locally based speech radio. We think so too. That is why the BBC's local radio stations have increasingly developed a unique role across the country – providing the community with local news, information and debate, and performing an important role as a platform for local democracy.

When major stories break in London, listeners know they will find in-depth coverage on BBC GLR. This "low-rating" service attracts more than 400,000 regular listeners.

Ms Toynbee is right, too, about the difficulties that regional television news services have in being genuinely local – a universal problem, not one unique to London. That's why, recognising the audience's appetite for greater localness, the BBC has committed itself to expand its broadcasting presence into more communities across the land, introducing new digital technology, broadcasting live reports from new fast-response vehicles, and strengthening the local content of our programmes.

Yet although it encompasses a large part of the South-east, BBC Newsroom South East is enormously popular within the Greater London area, currently enjoying a record 43 per cent share – more than 1.5 million nightly

viewers – its highest for more than two years.

NIGEL CHAPMAN
Controller, English Regions, BBC
Birmingham

Dentist still NHS

Sir: Your report "NHS dentist earns £604,000" (15 January) quotes Gordon Prentice MP: "The town where I live [Barnoldswick] doesn't have a single NHS dentist."

Mr Prentice seems to have forgotten that NHS dentistry is still available at this surgery here in Barnoldswick. We have more than 5,000 active NHS-registered patients and despite the antics of politicians – reduced registration period from two years to 15 months and reduction in items of treatment available – we will continue to strive to provide a quality NHS dental service.

EDWARD LOWERY
PAUL HADFIELD
Barnoldswick, Lancashire

Bum note

Sir: Jilly Cooper and Paul Barnett (report, 16 January; letter, 18 January) have both got it wrong. *Glockenspiel* is a German word and years ago, at a party in Austria, when I said I didn't know much German, I was asked to try to say something in that language.

Inventing rapidly, I said: "Meine Grossmutter hat ein grosses Glockenspiel" ... whereupon the assembled company fell about laughing. It was explained to me that in some areas of Austria, "Glockenspiel" is dialect for "bum".

LEN CLARKE
Uxbridge, Middlesex

Soccer terraces can now be safe

Sir: Your leading article of 21 January prompts me to put the case for safe terracing at some soccer grounds.

When Lord Justice Taylor condemned standing terrace areas and introduced all-seated stadiums he was right. As the then chairman of the All-Party Football Committee, I led a deputation to him to stress this. However, at that time, British engineers at NNC had not developed a revolutionary crowd monitoring system which electronically measures pressure on terrace barriers during a game.

In 1993 I was informed of this development, and went to see it. In February 1994, I took the Sports Minister, Iain Sproule, and he too was impressed. However, we both recognised that the time for Premier League clubs to consider this scheme had passed, and it went on to a back burner.

Since that time the pressure to reopen the debate has come from football supporters. Many complain about the lack of atmosphere at some of our finest stadiums, the reduced capacity and high prices for tickets.

The Labour Party's proposed Task Force for football will give supporters a voice at the very top of the football hierarchy. Issues such as this deserve to be considered.

Terracing will only be considered once the safety question is proved. No responsible government would preside over a return to the kind of terraced accommodation that cost so many lives at Hillsborough.

TOM PENDRY MP
(Stalybridge and Hyde, Lab)
Shadow Minister for Sport
House of Commons
London SW1

'Superwoman' is not that special

Sir: Nicola Horlick is dubbed "superwoman" for her ability to combine her "hectic" family life with a demanding job in the City (report, 20 January).

Mrs Horlick works from choice, not necessity, and earns enough to afford two large homes, full-time child care and sufficient domestic help to enable her, for example, to fly off to Frankfurt at a moment's notice.

The real superwomen are those who have to work in order to make ends meet, often in jobs they do not enjoy, while at the same time struggling to bring their children up in unsuitable accommodation.

Adequate child care for these superwomen is not affordable; school holidays and childhood illnesses are major crises for them; and their family life, hectic or no, does not include high-earning investment banking husbands.

ANGELA CRUM EWING
Reading, Berkshire

Elfin expletive

Sir: Though I have no wish to cast doubt on CS Lewis's ability to utter colourful expletives, the one reported by Boyd Tonkin ("Enduring spell of a trilogy that leaves the critics cold", 20 January) is, in fact, attributed to Hugo Dyson, another member of the Inklings. Lewis is unlikely to have effed about elves, as *The Lord of the Rings* would never have been completed without his constant encouragement.

COLIN DURIETZ
Leicester

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portrait

Made in Streatham, made it in Paris



John Galiano (left), plumber's son, born in Gibraltar, and raised in dreary south London, is truly one of us.

He is the darling of the French, but as English as an illegal rave

by Peter Popham

John Galiano's triumph this week, in his first *haute couture* presentation for Dior, is an opportunity for that most delicious of journalistic enquiries: why on earth are we so wonderful?

John Galiano, "son of a Streatham plumber" in the usual characterisation, is, after all, utterly one of us: the foreign-sounding name and the fact that he was born in Gibraltar, as well as the dreary south London provenance of his upbringing, actually render him more typically of this place and age than if he had English genes stretching back to the 'Domesday Book' and was raised in Tunbridge Wells.

Nor is he English in some apologetic, trans-Chanoe, Julian Barnes manner, more French than the French themselves and palpitating at the prospect of winning the Goncourt or translation to the Académie or some such apocryphosis. Galiano is as English as Camden High Street, as English as an illegal rave, as English as a capital city shorn of its own government these 13 years past.

His strengths sprout from the weaknesses and wildness of where he comes from; or, more accurately, from a com-

hination of weaknesses and strengths that is peculiarly and indubitably English. The strength: a brilliant art school education, whether at St Martin's (Galiano's college) or Goldsmiths' or the Royal College; the weakness: a fashion business that has never amounted to a hill of beans compared to its competitors abroad, that has never been able to put that carefully nurtured talent to use.

It is the weakness of a nation which, proverbially, has lost an empire and failed to find a role but, in that sad process, has experienced an implosion of races and languages and cultures. And while it has never done anything dramatic like embrace these huddled masses, let alone provide them with the wherewithal of a decent education, it has, passively, tolerated them. It has manifested that strength. It has allowed them to take their surly and benighted place alongside our own benighted native proletariat, allowed them to form a sort of multicultural mulch out of which a wonderful exotic bloom such as Galiano can sprout.

So let's be frank: as an opportunity for national preening, Galiano's latest triumph is way up there with Brenda



Galiano's designs are the biggest thing to hit the world of French couture since Dior's New Look (above left) in 1947

Blethyn at the Golden Globes and London on the cover of *Newsweek* as the trendiest town in the planet, not to mention Bruce and Demi mulling over a move to Berkshire. But more so than those stories, Galiano's gives us pause to think a little harder about the national face that stares back at us from the mirror, warts and all.

John Galiano's is a deceptive personality because his extreme visual flamboyance – with his pistachio saris and bleached dreadlocks and brocade waistcoats and hiker's leathers, he often upstages his own models and collections – masks genuine shyness. Likewise, his notoriously wild, party-loving lifestyle coexists with an extraordinary dedication to his craft, without which he could not have survived five minutes in the snobbish hell-hole of a Parisian couturier.

In a *South Bank Show* documentary about him, he compared what he does to his father's trade as a plumber, working out of sight on the hidden systems that underpin what appears on the surface. It seems a bizarre, perhaps sentimental analogy, yet when one sees Galiano entering the atelier (soft fabrics workroom) of Givenchy's headquarters in Paris, his eyes ablaze with anticipation, it rings true.

His rise to fame began in 1984 with his degree show at St Martin's; one observer remembers the "mad, hobo-ish woman clothes, a woman with clogs on with a tree coming out of her hair..." It was the first resounding yodel of a voice that has been distinctive and unmistakable ever since, and Joan Burstein of Browns, the fashion business in South Molton Street, immediately took the wild, tiny, frail-looking, hirsute figure under her wing and nurtured his development. She did so to such good effect that in 1987 he was named British Designer of the Year, the first of three occasions on which he has been given the award (1996 was the most recent).

But as many other designers discovered before him, London may be a brilliant crucible for young talent, but it's also a miserably inadequate marketplace for what that talent produces. London fashion week may continue to snap happily at the heels of Paris, Milan and New York, but the industry it represents remains a fraction of the size of its rivals. So in 1992, like many others before and since, Galiano headed for the bright lights of Paris.

His first three years were hard going: he arrived in town practically penniless, slept on friends' floors and had to beg or borrow everything he needed to get started, including the services of his models (but they all loved him, so that was okay). Critical acclaim continued to surround his work, but more than once he came close to financial disaster.

Then in autumn 1995 came the big, unprecedented break. It was announced from the company's elegant headquarters in the Avenue George V that Hubert de Givenchy, founder and chief designer of the eponymous *haute couture*, was retiring from the house he had founded in 1952. Givenchy was now owned by the conglomerate LVMH (standing for Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy) and the urbane, formal, precise founder, always immaculately besuited, was being replaced by a figure as drastically different as one could imagine. Galiano, the English wild man.

The caniness of this eccentric-seeming choice became apparent one year ago, in January 1996, when Galiano showed his first collection for the house, to great acclaim. Although no Englishman had ever headed an *haute couture* before, this strange, anachronistic pinnacle of the fashion business is one for which a British fashion training is in fact, it transpires, a pretty good preparation. Houses like Givenchy and Dior have a worldwide clientele of no more than 1,000 invariably wealthy women, who are willing to spend up to £20,000 on a single outfit; the nightgown-like creation the Princess of

Wales wore to New York in December, for example, designed by Galiano, is said to have cost £15,000. Despite the price tags on the clothes, so vast are the resources of skill and fabrics and time poured into each dress that no *haute couture* makes a profit from the core business: it is merely the most elaborate and gorgeous way of hyping the commercial products bearing the house's name: the lipsticks and scent and hair grips and the rest, by which it makes its money.

Haute couture therefore has to answer two somewhat contradictory imperatives: for the 1,000 wealthiest women, the clothes must be beautifully made, intensely alluring and (within certain rigidly prescribed contexts) wearable. For the rest of the world, meanwhile, for the mere onlookers (people like the cash-strapped Duchess of York, for example, gawping along with the rest in Paris this week), they must be

so stunning and brilliant and remarkable that, despite their irrelevance to one's own life and style, they are hypnotically interesting. They must be at the same time both an act of homage to wealth and taste, and a fireworks display.

What the French spotted in Galiano was that he was capable of homage as well as fireworks. His work, like most of the best new London work of the past 15 years, whether in fine art or architecture or fashion, as well as being a gut response to the present is intensely involved with the past. Its inspiration is flea markets and the Victoria and Albert Museum and dusty books as much as in the work of contemporaries. So when Galiano buried himself in the Givenchy archive – and latterly, since his promotion last October within LVMH to head Dior, in Dior's too – it was not out of inadequacy or nerves; it was doing one of the things he loves best: immersing himself in a fantastic conversation with the past.

For Galiano, all times and all places coincide in the here and now: the France of the *belle époque*, opium era China, pre-modern Japan, the Africa of the Masai tribesmen, all permed and frothed together in intensely romantic confections. But underpinning it and sometimes undermining it, leading it at times a lethal edge of irony, at other times merely a whiff of reality, is the grunge and grime of the streets of Streatham, where the whole thing started.

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Locked up in a Cabinet for years – it's criminal

A disturbing report has been published which seems to demonstrate that no useful purpose is served by locking people up in a small space for years on end and expecting their behaviour to be improved by it.

The report is based on the study of the case of a Mr Michael Howard, who has spent the past five to 10 years inside a small Cabinet in central London. When he was put inside he was an obscure lawyer who seemed normal and harmed nobody except those with whom he came in regular contact. Now he is not only a potential danger to most people in the country, but has become a persistent court offender, is subject to dangerous hallucinations and has developed strange behavioural patterns.

"It would be simplistic to argue that all this has been brought on simply by being inside this Cabinet," says the report. "However, it would probably also be completely accurate."

What Mr Howard says is that locking people up is a way of preventing crime, and that the more people you lock up, the less crime there will be.

"We all know that locking people up actually creates more criminals," says the report. "Well, we all know this except Mr Howard. But Mr Howard has made arrangements for more and more places to be built where more and more people can be locked up. At the same time the crime figures have not gone down. A sane person might draw the conclusion that the policy is mistaken. However, Mr Howard's thought processes seem not to be what we normally think of as sane. One reason for thinking this is that he seems compulsively driven to lock up people who could not possibly be improved by being locked up."

By this the report seems to mean people who have failed to pay fines, many of whom have been locked up by Mr Howard. The reason that people cannot pay fines is that they have not got the money. The reason they have not got the money is that they are poor. Many of the poorest



Miles Kington

people in society are young single mothers. Therefore Mr Howard takes a lot of young mothers away from their children and locks them up to teach them to pay fines.

"A sane person would not view this as a logical policy from any angle," says the report. "It may be that he actually derives some strange sort of pleasure from locking people up but this was outside our remit. What is undeniable is that being confined to a Cabinet has caused a significant deterioration in the behaviour

of the subject, a change of which he has no awareness."

Part of the reason for his unwitting change seems to be that when you are confined to a Cabinet like Mr Howard you are surrounded by members of a peer group who suffer from the same deficiencies.

"It is not easy to generalise," says the report. But then it goes on to say, "Sorry, that's wrong. It is easy to generalise, and one thing we can say is that almost everyone in such a Cabinet is subject to driving ambition, ruthless opportunism, dishonesty in spreading rumours about colleagues or leaking documents, an inability to distinguish the truth and an increasing reluctance to admit the truth to the public. It is sometimes said that the best way to promote crime is to lock up criminals in the same place together, for as long as possible, and the same is certainly true of politicians."

Mr Howard's behaviour has certainly not improved during his sojourn in the Cabinet. Before he went in, he had never been in trouble with the law. However, the longer he has stayed in this

Cabinet, the more he has been in trouble with courts who have repeatedly condemned him for law-breaking. He has shown no remorse, no awareness of wrongdoing – indeed, he has tended to brag about it as if it makes him appear more macho. He has gone in front of large crowds and gloried in it. He has recently even acquired the delusion that he might be the next leader of the Tory party. He suffers, in brief, from that rare disorder: an excess of self-esteem.

"Power, fame and media exposure are powerful drugs," says the report. "They circulate freely in this Cabinet, despite denials. They cause unusual behaviour patterns. We do not blame Mr Howard for his present condition. This is no time to apportion blame. All we ask is that Mr Howard be taken out of the Cabinet where he has been for far too long and returned to the community. It may still not be too late for him to be useful to society."

If you wish to know more about this distressing case, please write (c/o me) to the Penal League for Howard Reform.

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Leopards that will spring out on Labour

Peter Lilley lay like a leopard in the long grass, choosing his moment to spring upon Harriet Harman. He waited until Gordon Brown made his punishing tax and spending promises on Monday and then he pounced. It was a rapid and deadly stratagem, an ambush other Labour shadow ministers can expect as a result of Brown's impossibly commitment that Labour would spend no more on each department than the Government itself would never have managed to stay within those limits.

This is what Lilley has done: in the Budget the Chancellor announced that the Lone Parent Premium (£5.20 extra for single parents on income support) and One Parent Benefit (£6.30 for working single parents) will be axed. It was a neat ploy, signalling moral disapproval of single parents while saving £100m a year.

Harman protested that the cuts would hit the weakest but otherwise no great cry went up. The silence was eerie. Once, hundreds of thousands would have been out on the streets in protest, but times have changed: people are resigned to government callousness, or simply don't care. Single parents account for most of the huge growth in poverty. They are the most vulnerable group, so cutting their benefits is dangerous cruelty. But in cut the premium that helps them in work is plain madness, as many will sink back into unemployment. This is one of the most monstrous things this government has done – though you wouldn't think so from the lack of public indignation.

Be that as it may, this is the Tory Social Security Secretary's trap: to make these cuts he must consult his Advisory Committee, then put a Bill through Parliament. That cannot be done before June – by which time Labour could be in power. So will Harman, as her very first act, implement these cuts, or will she find £100m to plug the gap that Brown is committed to keeping at its present level?

Here is Lilley's triumphant letter:

"Dear Harriet, "This afternoon Gordon Brown pledged to stay within the public spending limits. Our spending plans depend on retaining and implementing my social security reforms. Yet you have opposed or criticised all these reforms. Can you confirm... that you will introduce in government our proposed legislation... for single parents?"

"Will new Labour carry through these Conservative policies which you have criticised? If not, what other specific programmes will you cut to keep overall spending the same? You cannot duck these questions: people will know that evasive waffle in Opposition means expensive whammies in Government."

"Yours sincerely, Peter Lilley."

The increasing use of the unconditional future tense – "you will introduce in government" – may be gratifying evidence that Tory



Polly Toynbee

Peter Lilley sets a £100m trap for Harman over tax pledges

ministers have already given up the ghost, but such questions still have to be answered in every department. Harman declined to step neatly into his trap. She side-stepped, replying:

"Dear Peter,

"By using money from a windfall levy on the excess and unfair profits of the privatised utilities we will get 250,000 under-25-year-olds off benefit and into work and create opportunities for people who have been unemployed for over two years by offering a National Insurance holiday in employers who take them on... A Labour government will inherit a social security system which you and your government have made expensive for taxpayers and degrading for claimants. We will have to start work immediately on making the system fairer."

"Yours sincerely, Harriet."

So, will she or won't she introduce Tory legislation to cut single parents' benefits? "No, of course not," she says when asked. So how will she pay for the shortfall? By getting many of the 1 million single parents on benefits back in work and saving their income support. 500,000 of them have a youngest child aged five or over and they could work, at least part time, if someone gave them a push. The part-time jobs are there and Labour has promised the necessary after-school clubs from the lottery fund. Currently, single mothers just receive a letter once every three years and are not registered unemployed, and no one urges them into work.

Maybe, then, she can escape this particular trap, if Brown is satisfied with her reply. But the last budget, as it is analysed more carefully by the experts, contains all kinds of deliberate dishonesties – land-mines for incoming ministers trying to keep within its impossible limits.

Just take some of the social security estimates, for instance: the Budget reckons a new Fraud Bill will save £7bn, but few experts think so. £1bn is supposed to be saved by a new DSS computer; others strongly doubt it. Estimates for social security land sales are extraordinarily optimistic. Never before has the DSS deducted a notional sum (for an expected fall in unemployment (increases during bad employment years were never added.) "Honest" Ken Clarke knows he won't be facing the music, so he has produced a budget full of holes. If, by some miracle, he finds himself back in the hot seat come May, then he will simply put up taxes to cover the shortfall. If not, then Brown has foolishly swallowed his bait by promising to abide by an unworkable budget.

If things look grim in social security, that is nothing compared to the calamity that will hit the incoming health minister. In the last 17 years, NHS real growth has averaged 2.6 per cent a year. But the limits Brown has signed up to are: this year the NHS gets only 0.9 per cent, next year 0.8 per cent, the year after 0.7 per cent. Clark must be laughing up his sleeve, for out there in the long grass are plenty more leopards awaiting their Labour shadows.

The lush rhythms of poetry and pubs

by Ruth Padel

Alcohol is the maypole of poetry life. Poets don't take many solids, for purely (of course) economic reasons. Poets get paid peanuts, and at parties they hover round tables lapping things up like camels facing a meal-less desert. Six drinks and a pack of crisps are standard supper. You don't often see a fat poet, though Seamus Heaney's putting it on a little now.

So the Australian poet Les Murray, who won the TS Eliot Prize last week, breaks records for the unsayable, exploring the shame of fatness (a boy on the beach "holding his wet T-shirt off his breasts"), and making fat spark off against all the other cruelties he writes about.

But that's Australia. Let's say you don't see many fat British or Irish poets.

On the economic front, I once watched Carol Ann Duffy see off a large salaried journalist at a literary party. "How long," he said, jelling over her, "does it take you to write a poem?" "About five minutes," said Carol Ann, cool and instant as a small iced cappuccino. "And how much do you get for that?" "A thousand pounds," I wish...

Among the top 10 questions people ask poets, "Are you still writing poetry?" is a favourite: unbearable when you know you'll never write a poem again, exasperating when you're working on one. (Still building cathedrals, Mr Wren?) Another question, a male speciality, is a line of patronising suspicion which leans on the more obvious aspects of technique (that well-documented male weakness). From Greek ship-owners to Paul Johnson, they all ask, "Do you use rhyme?"

Not using rhyme in a poem is like starting to decorate without white paint. You don't have to slather the walls in it; you can mix it with Apache Orange, try fancy marbling, draw regency stripes or a frieze of zebras if you like, but you must have it on hand. Poets put rhyme mid-line, if not at the end. They squish it, slant it, run and cheat with it. Rather, I imagine, as those guys "use" maths – in shipping, or counting words for the Spectator.

Christopher Reid performed a *tour de force* of harking rhymes brilliantly last week at the Almeida Theatre, which hosts a reading of poets short-listed for the Eliot prize. This is Reid's notorious curse-poem.



Ruth Padel: 'Poets don't take many solids, for purely economic reasons' David Rose

It came into its own as art of the recession – you could have a wild cultural experience in the Troubadour for £4 and get to buy a poet a drink

barbed back against two insomnia dogs next door. ("One has vanished since, so don't believe Auden when he says 'poetry makes nothing happen'") Chris hinted at a magical affinity between rhyming and violence. We heard it at work in his poem about male caribou clashing on TV. Like "jousting with hatstuds", he said. (Or the *South Bank Show*?) Good subject, the testosterone of rhyme.

It was a wonderful night at the Almeida, between the rac-

ing wind-channel of the archway and the tropical botany of the bar stuffed with glamorous agents like Pat Kavanagh, who you never saw at poetry readings before. Valerie Eliot and the Poetry Book Society created the Eliot prize. People were being turned away in glossy herds. ("Full up" But it's a poetry reading.)

Ian McDiarmid, who runs the theatre, recognises poetry as the newly fashionable art about-town. Poetry came into

its own as art of the recession. You could have a wild cultural experience for £4 in the heady charroscuro of the Troubadour basement, and get to buy a poet a drink.

But prizes are turning poetry into a bloodsport. For 10 shortlisted poets, the Eliot prize means a Sunday evening reading, a nail-biting Monday while the judges do their hit alone, then a media party announcing the winner. Horrifying, watching friends whose work you've loved and

admired for maybe years, waiting to hear who's won. Novelists face it as telly for the Booker but it shouldn't happen to a poet.

Still, if the cost of poetry's new chic is nine souls going through hell two days a year, I suppose it must be paid. As a judge, I got rung up afterwards for comments about Les Murray by an arts editor who didn't approve of prizes but wouldn't have had a story without them.

The Almeida evening only spluttered when an Australian actor from *Neighbours*, invited to read Les's work (since he comes from the same place), said he'd never heard of him, and sent up the lurid on the back of his book. "Poet of the sacred, but wise in this world: doesn't leave much out, does he?" If he'd known his job it might have been OK, but *Neighbours* doesn't give much practice in words and he read as if he'd just picked up his Albanian granny's recipe for chestnut stuffing, confirming all poets in their conviction that actors can't read poems.

Writing Poetry, an about-to-be indispensable handbook by Matthew Sweeney and John Hartley Williams (out in April), says the same. "Actors think poets can't read their own poems; poets know actors can't."

Writing Poetry warns you of poetry's belt-tightening economics and goes deep into technicalities such as rhyme (though not its testosterone), and other features of the poetry landscape. Except – Matthew, John, bless the bed we all lie on, how could you leave it out? – for alcohol. When my daughter's class discussed "Do not go gentle into that good night", a clued-up kid asked, "Wasn't Dylan Thomas an alcoholic?" "All poets are alcoholics," came the answer. Lovely daughterly bristles ("My mum's a poet and she's not...") – but her real view surfaced the following week when I was late picking her up. "I thought you'd done a reading, got drunk, and forgotten me." Not that I ever... Oh well.

The writer was a judge for the 1996 TS Eliot Prize. Her most recent poetry collection is *Firewire* (Chatto and Windus).

Where in a drink, or buy a poet a drink: Poetry Book Society, 0181-870-8403; Troubadour Café poetry readings, 0171-835 2282; Piccadilly Poets, 0171-287-2875.

The personal is the historical

Michael Ignatieff has pulled our century apart. And found that it's about him. By Paul Valley

"Technology was supposed to take my father's suffering from him. In the event it took him from us, to die alone in an intensive care unit."

Michael Ignatieff has tried hard to keep himself out of his history of the 20th century. But he has lived in it. So its history is his history. Even so, his personal life extrudes just once – and only for the two sentences quoted above – in the new series of Radio 4's award-winning review of the past 10 decades, *20/20*, which Ignatieff takes over from John Tusa at its halfway point tonight.

Intellectuals tend to shy away from the personal; they are happier with ideas than with people. And the Canadian historian – best known for his smoothly cerebral performances on BBC2's former arts flagship *The Late Show* – is, in an age of jangling journalistic populism, shamelessly splendidly intellectual. So is his new series. And then, in its midst, come these two odd sentences.

On the television Ignatieff comes across with a cool self-certainty which some find irritating. In the flesh he is all engaging diffidence and searching self-doubt. "I didn't realise until I began, that when you have lived through an era, the history you relate will be your own personal history. Looking back, I realised that its public events had made much more impact on me than I had supposed. So one of the sub-themes was to historicise my own experience: every single death in my family – my mother, father, aunts and uncles – five in the last 10 years – have all involved me and my immediate family in making decisions."

At the beginning of the century death was a more daily visitor. A visit to a Victorian cemetery underscores the fact that one in 10 children died in infancy and half the population

expected to die before the age of 45. "I'm beset by nostalgia and this series has to some extent cured me of it," he says. "You wouldn't want to check into an Edwardian hospital with appendicitis or with a child who had diphtheria. The improvement of medicine has brought new dilemmas – but they are dilemmas I want."

And yet at the end of the 20th century we experience the phenomenon of death in the family with more moral anguish. "Was I right to turn off my mum's ventilator?" he asks. "I think I was, but the 20th century has brought freedoms which bring bitter and difficult moments."

Medicine is just one of the subjects he tackles. *20/20* takes a thematic approach rather than a chronological one. In addition to suffering he looks, over the next five weeks, at Creating, Spending, Growing, and Constructing. But from all the themes one big question emerges: have we made moral as well as technological progress? Are morality and technology, he asks, on a collision course?

The question is not restricted to the area of medical ethics. It is there in politics, economics, ecology and even architecture. The dreams of the great French architect Le Corbusier ended in the unnatural gravity-defying tower blocks of the Fifties and Sixties. The cathedrals of the early decades were the buildings of Chrysler, Hitler, Stalin which embodied the certainty that the world can be known and mastered. The Sixties brought the white heat of technology.

"That was the great false promise of modernity – that we can control our lives," says Ignatieff. But the technology that was supposed to make us safe and secure has instead created a world which is running out of control. The myth of the all-conquering scientist led us to expect one triumph



Ignatieff: 'Progress of sorts'

after another. The idea of medical progress encouraged the idea of a utopia in which suffering would be abolished and death, if not abolished, would at least be postponed indefinitely. "He is back to medicine again. And yet the real enemy is disease. So why are we treating death? When is enough enough?"

Tentatively he tells the story of his mother's death. Of how, seconds after she died, a young doctor entered the room and said: "I think she needs more morphine." "My brother said: 'I don't think she needs anything now, doctor.' I resented the fact that he intruded at that moment. There was some sense in which my mother's death had been expropriated."

Perhaps that was inevitable in a century when death and birth have moved from the home to the hospital. But there is a sense also that medical

advances have shifted us from a culture of endurance to a culture of complaint and still we can't find a meaning in suffering. So two-thirds of the health budget in a country like Canada goes on the terminally ill. The developed world has decided it needs in die with dignity while the Third World does not even have the wherewithal to live, with dignity or without.

One of the reasons many are disappointed in the 20th century is that we still have a 19th-century Darwinian notion of progress, as the historian Christopher Cook has said. Yet the rebellion of hippie culture, and later environmentalism, showed that there was a powerful counter-current to the consumerism that came to rescue capitalism.

"People have invested a tremendous amount of meaning in their belongings – a car is a woman, a car is freedom, and so on," says Ignatieff. "But part of them knows that in the end it's just a car." Even in a world of McDonald's values nobody believes that consumption provides the answer to the ultimate questions.

That said, the traditional forum for tackling such questions – orthodox religion – is crumbling too. Ignatieff is an agnostic and not disposed to be nostalgic about religion, but it did provide a space and a language in which people could reach to the transcendent once a week. "One of the odd things about the 20th century is how those considerations have been whisked out of public life."

Like death, religion has been privatised. There is no common public language. "You feel alone, whereas in religious cultures you have a congregation and the whole proscenium arch of ritual and meaning in which life and death was framed." So we are witnessing a gradual secularisation? "There has been an ebbing of public

religious doctrine. But it's the waning of religious authority, not belief."

He detects a new, solitary, religious sensibility. "Scratch most individuals and you find some sense of the metaphysical." It may be pick-and-mix with a bit of Buddhism, a bit of Christianity and a bit of superstition but it is their own. If it is unarticulated or unformulated it is deeply believed. The religious impulse has gone into ethics, into the environment, into popular science, with all the interest in the Big Bang, and the international outrage over genocide which is a new thing in the 20th century. The ghost of religion has survived.

In 1915 the Turks got away with slaughtering hundreds of thousands of Armenians. In 1994 when the Hutus did the same to the Tutsis the world intervened – inadequately and too late – but it intervened. That is moral progress of sorts."

So we are back to progress. One of the great surprises for Ignatieff in making the series was to discover how much he needed a sense of progress. Without it, as some wage once put it, history is just one damned thing after another. "And then one begins to think," says Ignatieff, "that one's life is just one damned thing after another. I find I need the idea of progress more than I had supposed."

And if, after the grandiose project of modernism, the people who survive into the next millennium are suspicious of great schemes and certainties, or more sceptical, or just more conscious of environmental or other considerations, that may be no bad thing. "At the end of the century we're in a very unheroic, unpromethean, unromantic culture. But it may mean it's a better place to live. Perhaps this is not such a bad time to be alive."

Michael Ignatieff presents *20/20* on Radio 4 tonight at 7.45pm.

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obituaries / gazette

Myfanwy Piper

Myfanwy Piper was a writer with an unusual breadth of response to character and to art.

She was the ideal collaborator with Benjamin Britten to provide for him the librettos of three of his operas, as she could convey the unease of the disturbing stories that he chose, while allowing space for the music he would write. She understood what his musical imagination needed, just as in the 1930s she had responded to the new abstract painting of Mondrian and Kandinsky in Paris, and had promoted them and the young British avant-garde by founding and editing the magazine *Art*. Her marriage to John Piper for more than 50 years was a close duet of writer and painter, in which their house in the Chilterns where they lived from 1935 became a creative centre for the collaborative arts.

Myfanwy Evans was born in 1911 in London, the only child of a Welsh father and an English mother of Huguenot origin. Both her grandfathers were ministers, one Welsh-speaking in Tenby, and the other, Charles Playl, a Congregational Minister at Louth. Her father David Evans was a dispensing chemist, and she grew up in his house over the shop Allchins in Englands Lane, Hampstead. It was the inspiring teaching at North London Collegiate School that introduced her to the arts, and enabled her to win an Exhibition to St Hugh's, Oxford, in 1930.

Women at Oxford were then still merely a part of the background, but she was an outstanding swimmer, and captain of the team that won the university match in 1932. Her interest in modern art and literature was encouraged by her friendship with her contemporaries Justin Blacow-White, the future architect, and Nicolette Binyon. It was through Justin's parents that she met the painter Ivon Hitchens, who invited her to join a summer painting party at Sizewell in Suffolk in July 1934. One of the artists was John Piper, who had recently separated from his wife. He and Myfanwy were an instant success with each other, enjoying different styles of upbringing, an eight-year-old difference in age and complementary interests in modern art as admirer and practitioner. They married in 1937.

She had already arranged to spend four weeks in Paris, and Piper put her in contact with the French-American abstract painter Jean Hélion. It was a crash course in modernism, making appointments and visiting studios, at a unique time when there was developing a new taste that was determined to be international, yet still only appealed to a tiny number of intellectually lively people. Hélion encouraged her to found an English review of abstract art, and recommended her to Ben Nicholson, the leader of the group in London.

Art was published from 1935 to 1937, and is remarkable first for her confidence in selecting worthy contributors as writers and artists, and second for a gradual shift in taste, towards rebuilding an English primitive tradition on abstract principles, evident as much in her own editorials as in John Piper's painting.

She and John moved into the abandoned farmhouse at Fawley Bottom, beyond Henley, at first with no water, electricity or heating. Only slowly becoming less uncomfortable, it nevertheless became the focus of a group of friends, especially John and Penelope Betjeman, Geoffrey Grigson, and Osbert and Karen Lancaster. Betjeman so admired Myfanwy that he wrote poems about her in the totally imaginary character of a nanny, and as an undergraduate, equally unlike, at Oxford.

As her husband John began to work regularly with publishers and for public commissions, her role as artist's assistant became more demanding, and writing in any case took second place while their four children were young. The house became a refuge during the war, often for John's patron Kenneth Clark and his family. Clark commissioned from her a Penguin Modern Painters volume on Francis Hodgkins, which remains one of the most convincing appreciations of a modern British painter.

She had known Britten from the time of a notably argumentative meeting of the Group Theatre at Fawley Bottom before the war. They became much closer while John was designing for him and was a Director of the English Opera Group. They heard all his new music, and Britten in turn looked up to John as a mentor.



Ideal collaborator: Piper with Benjamin Britten at Aldeburgh, 1960

Photograph: Hulton Getty

In modern art, The Pipers lived so far from Aldeburgh, were not part of Britten's immediate circle, and could not become, even potentially, rivals, that they were among the few who remained his lifelong friends.

It was Myfanwy who suggested that Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw* would appeal to him as a situation for an opera, and they at first worked together on it, informally, until the commission from La Fenice in Venice was arranged in 1953. Problems of simplifying the plot were solved by setting it as a series of linked scenes, to be designed by John. The precise meaning of the haunting and the corruption of the children was hidden by use of poetic language, and Myfanwy was able to half-conceal and half-reveal the sexual implications, leaving much open to the music and the performance.

The friendship with Britten was later strained briefly by her and John's support for the South African dancer and choreographer John Cranko, who Britten at first accepted, but then dismissed. For Cranko's friend the Danish actor Erik Mork, she re-cast as a

practical gifts to John's art are evident, but far more important was her equal contribution to their exceptional evolution into what Kenneth Clark described as "two of the most completely humanised people I have ever known". Fawley Bottom was a model of hard work and friendship. Myfanwy was renowned as a pioneer of a French style of cooking (first learnt from Boulestin). They gave memorable parties, often with fireworks, in which the house was turned into an enchanted stage set. Since John delighted in working with other artists and specialists, the use of his house as an extensive workplace was vital.

In her last years she endured the loss of her eldest child, the artist Edward Piper, and devoted more care than seemed possible to looking after her husband John in his slow decline until his death in 1992.

David Fraser Jenkins

Myfanwy Evans, an critic and librettist: born London 28 March 1911; married 1937, John Piper (died 1992); one son, two daughters, and one son deceased; died Fawley Bottom, Buckinghamshire 18 January 1997.

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Sir Tobias Rodgers Bt

"J. F. T. Rodgers, Rare Books", the last catalogue read, and below, in small type, "Prop Sir Tobias Rodgers Bt". It was not vainglorious but his self-quizzical sense of irony, the ridiculousness of life, that prompted this last extravaganza. In the world of books he made a small but distinct mark, unforgettable to all who knew him. To them, he was always Toby, handsome, witty, tirelessly and endlessly reading, learned in all sorts of recondite ways, a giver of parties, helpless somehow and *au fond* unhelpable, but always irresistible.

He was born in 1940, the son of John Rodgers, a pillar of J. Walter Thompson, and later Radio Luxembourg, one of the founders of *History Today*, Conservative MP for Sevenoaks from 1950 to 1979. Taking Churchill's advice always to live outside your constituency, the family settled at Groombridge, and there Toby was brought up. He got a scholarship to Eton, and another to Worcester College, Oxford. The Fellows' Library at Eton was then inaccessible to boys, so it was out until he got to Oxford, where Colonel C.H. Wilkinson and John Sparrow encouraged young bibliophiles, that a sense of the extra quality of reading old books in the original editions entered his life.

By great ill-fortune he was struck down by meningitis just before he was due to take his finals, and being incapacitated before rather than during the examinations was unable even to get an *agregat*, which would have been at least a degree, as well as an agreeable anachronism.

He had not fully recovered when he went out into the world to look for a living. After a very short time teaching English in a language school, he found his way to Bernard Quaritch, the great antiquarian bookseller, then in Grafton Street, E.M. Dring, the managing director, had not long before lost his close colleague and friend Oliver Howard, who had died unexpectedly, and was looking immediately for a bright young man to help, but with an eye for a successor. Rodgers was not to know this, but the startling impact that his letter asking for a job, on Brooks's Club writing paper, made at Quaritch's, Mr Dring, who had a prescient sense for talent, was not misled by that or Rodgers's rather lackadaisical manner (he was still far from well) when he came for interview just before Christmas 1962.

He began work at Quaritch early in the New Year, and, although it was hard for him to adjust to the old-fashioned discipline and venerable surroundings, he realised that he had found his *milieu*. He learnt a great deal from Ted Dring and became immensely fond of him, as he of Rodgers. This did not stop their having rows, sometimes respectable rows, and Rodgers's great learning and independent judgement suggested changes in ways of selling books that had hardly altered since the 19th century, sometimes less so when Rodgers arrived late or was late back after lunch. But gradually his style—hegan to find his way into Quaritch's staid catalogues.

His moment of glory came with a special catalogue on trade and commerce, which he entitled *How to Get Rich*. He got away with that, but there was another row when Dring asked him to write an introduction: Rodgers refused and walked out. Next morning he came in with a perfect introduction. It began, characteristically: "This catalogue consists of the bottom of a remarkable West Country barrel." It was, however, his swan-song at Quaritch's.

The constructions of a large firm stirred longings for independence, and to May 1968 he set up an independent business with his friend Paul Grinke, up some very steep steps in Bruton Place. They began with two catalogues, the first Grinke's on art and architecture, the second Rodgers's, on *English Books 1510-1740*. It was the time when the Royal Institution was selling its older books and there were rich pickings, particularly books of the Huguenot scholar Louis Dutens. The mixture was, in the event, too rich, and Grinke and Rodgers amicably went their separate ways in 1970.

Next year Rodgers published his first independent catalogue, *A Small But Important Collec-*

tion of Elizabethan and Stuart Literature. This was no more, in fact rather less than, the truth: its chief achievement was the identification of *Youths Wine*, an allusive miscellany, as the work of Robert Greene. Five more such catalogues followed, each one with its share of books that no one else would have found or seen the significance of, all described with the same eye for quality of text or condition, in words as felicitous as witty.

It was this that led me to ask him to write for the quarterly magazine the *Book Collector*. He did — occasionally; it was a joint agony for it hurt him to write as it did me to wait and wonder if it would ever come. But what he wrote when he did was so well worth waiting for that the cost seemed unimportant. There was a wonderful piece on a Proust exhibition, his note pointing out, in the middle of a correspondence on genuine deaths by falling from library ladders, that the composer Alkan did not so die, but was crushed by a bookcase falling on top of him.

In 1978, with Justine Buzden, a refugee from Christie's, Rodgers opened a bookshop in Cecil Court. He called it Quevedo, and the name of the Spanish visionary, overlist and scholar was apt. Increasingly in love with Spain, he kept a stock as much Spanish as English, always early and out of the way. But shopkeeping was not really his line. Regular hours, indeed keeping the place open at all, never seemed to matter very much. One day, he shut the shop for good and moved the stock, eventually, to Charlotte Street, where, for the time being, it slept.

There was too much else to engage him. He could never resist the good things in life, and some of the bad ones too. "Nothing that he eats does him any good, and nothing that he drinks does him any harm," said his servant of the last life fellow of Trinity. The same was long true of Toby Rodgers. Women loved him and did their best to feed him, but nothing filled out his waith-like thinness; otherwise a diet of Gaultiers or more awful Spanish weeds and vodka seemed to have no other effect on him. He travelled a lot to Spain often, to Czechoslovakia with the art dealer Kasmin, to Burma for a long time. And he gave the most memorable parties in and around his flat in Warwick Avenue. You would be summoned at short notice or none, and there would be wonderful food and drink, and such people: the famous, the brilliant, the difficult, the unknown — a model here, a taxi driver whose conversation had amused him. It was a wild mixture.

But nothing seemed to be coming of it. He became more reclusive, drank too much: "What's become of Toby?" his friends would ask nervously. Then, suddenly, the magic returned. Last year another catalogue appeared, with all the old diversity and charm, and then another, if anything more diverse and delightful. But with the books, there was a faint music in the air, a fleeting *habanera*, that seemed to die away, as when the gods deserted Antony. Ill he visibly was, but he had given up drinking. Why did he have to go just when the magic seemed to have returned?

The joke was always on him, writes James Fergusson. Tobias Rodgers was a sublimely comic figure, ridiculously tall, painfully thin, with lugubrious lips and (for a long time) moustache to match. He told stories of what might have been — dead-pan stories, himself their butt — of how he nearly bought this, nearly sold that; of how, again, he might have made his fortune. There would be a hint of infinite sadness, and then — then, he would writhe with laughter.

The last 20 years of Toby's life, when I knew him, were a celebration of failure: a triumphant assertion that the individual was more important than the system; a fests of perverse integrity. Toby was a brilliant linguist, as able in Turkish as Basque, who ever found a use for his languages except in ingeniously complicated holidays and imagined art-smuggling heists. He was an expert on the Spanish Civil War who never wrote the book on anarchism which he for 35 years intended. He was an elegant and economical writer who, indeed,

hardly wrote anything; an unlikely career as a restaurant reviewer for *Vogue* faltered after barely one meal. He was a gift-bearer on girls who never sustained a lasting relationship; a keen cook who almost gave up eating, an enthusiast for gardening, for bridge, for racing, who would do anything rather than work but deplored his indolence.

He was, too, an extraordinary and generous giver of parties — when he turned up to them. He threw enormous dinners round his ping-pong table; he organised massive communal fires; work displays for Guy Fawkes Day. But sometimes there was a slip between cup and lip: on one occasion his dinner guests were so alarmed when they found themselves massed on the pavement outside his brightly lit house peeling on the bell that they called the police. On gaining entry, they found his French windows open and the trail of his footprints across a dewy lawn. Toby had run away.

If he didn't run away, he could fall altogether to buy food for his guests, or buy food (I remember once a huge, delicious sea bass) and be too drunk to cook it. Toby had a drink problem, it was not so much a drink problem as a life problem. He saw himself as a hero in an unequal struggle: a struggle with his father, even after his father had died; a steady tussle in the book trade, where he was the only person in step and all other dealers had given in to some suburban Mephistopheles.

He told me once, a few bottles on, that he was the best, the



Rodgers: 'a boulevardier'

best, catalogue of old books living, there was no one to touch him. It was late. One nodded. The last time he had produced a catalogue was in the late 1970s from Quevedo in Cecil Court, the shop that was never open. Then, in January 1996, out of nowhere, from J.F.T. Rodgers of Charlotte Street (another shop that was never open, underneath the *Oldie*), came *100 Rare Books on 100 Different Subjects*, a catalogue that was *suave*, quirky, seductive, various, perfectly formed.

In an unusual preface note, he described himself as "more of a boulevardier than a bookseller" and the spirit of the boulevardier flowed beguilingly through the catalogue. "I cannot imagine," he wrote of one item, "who would want to buy a volume bound in about 1760 containing works on painting, the cedars of Lebanon, designs for country houses and what the female beau monde of Edinburgh wore in 1756. I hope that such a person exists."

The books were on all subjects from archery and lunacy and the human digestion to vipers, calligraphy and the wine trade, farmhouse design and the fall of Granada. The highlight was a miniature he asserted to be by Nicholas Hilliard, at £28,000, but equally interesting were his (few) items under £100, or, at £700, the printed account of the first Sahara crossing in an automobile, 1924, inscribed by Monsieur Citroën himself and, much later, David Hockney. The catalogue was a *tour de force*, and Bernard Levin, of all people, devoted a whole column to it in the *Times*.

A second catalogue followed in October, *More Rare Books on 100 Diverse Subjects*, equally deft and diverting, and a third was promised of books on the Ottoman Empire — "scant but rare and in the finest condition". Now it will never appear. The old rogue; there are only his footprints in the grass.

John Fairlie Tobias Rodgers, antiquarian bookseller: born 2 July 1940; succeeded 1993 as second Bt; died London 19 January 1997.

Nicholas Hinton

The manner of Nicholas Hinton's death, whilst on a peacekeeping mission in Croatia with the International Crisis Group, was a metaphor for his life: in action, doing what he believed in, with passion and commitment that few could match. The voluntary sector in the UK and the international community has lost a respected public servant whose wisdom was sought and whose energy was envied by friends and colleagues worldwide.

By 1985, when he became Director-General of the Save the Children Fund, Hinton was already a respected and well-known champion of the voluntary sector, having been Director of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations for seven years and also Chief Executive of the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (Nacro). When he left Nacro in 1977, the Permanent Secretary and senior officials at the Home Office held a reception for him as a tribute to his achievements in that organisation.

In 1977 he joined the National Council of Social Service (later to become the National Council for Voluntary Organisations) at a critical moment in its history. Despite its many past achievements, in the mid-1970s NCVO presented a confused and unfocused image to the world and the voice of the voluntary sector lacked force. With Sara Morrison as Chair, Hinton brought clarity, direction and a new confidence to the organisation, as well as fun and enthusiasm. Although finding little time for gardening whilst at NCVO, he often used horri-

cultural analogies when describing his managerial objectives: he was particularly keen on "pruning" and "making bonfires".

He combined steely determination with down-to-earth realism and the ability to pick a brilliant staff team, winning the support and resources of government, charitable trusts and other backers for his ideas. He was good at spotting issues: the role of voluntary organisations could play in combatting unemployment and providing alternatives for those out of work, the importance of cultivating and nurturing local voluntary action as a voice for the voiceless, a provider of services and enabling people to do things for themselves. Above all he spoke up for the vital independence of voluntary action and the need to protect and nurture that quality, regardless of whether it made others uncomfortable.

In 1985 Hinton brought to Save the Children those managerial characteristics that had reformed NCVO. He found an organisation that was cosy and confident but perhaps lacking in ambition and vision. These he was able to provide: as Director-General, he was faced with challenges of global proportions and was immediately brought face to face with the inertia, complexity and bureaucracy of United Nations agencies, whose reform he advocated for many years. Although Hinton was no revolutionary, he was a politician who achieved a huge amount for his constituents — the children and young people of the world — without ever holding elected office. Fortunately for the voluntary sector, he came second in the one Parliamentary seat he contested, for the SDP, in Somerset and Frome, in 1983.

The legacy of reading law at Selwyn College, Cambridge, was apparent in his formidable skills as an administrator. Hinton transformed Save the Children: he focused its mission, raised its income to over £100m and reformed its structures. But amid a welter of activity his office door was always open to give advice or hear complaints. He once described his style as "tough but honourable", a description which would be recognised by the successive Ministers for Overseas Development, Chris Patten, and Baroness Chalker, with whom Hinton worked closely. Always his own man, he combined with this an acute sense of po' a reality, using his extensive contacts within Whitehall discreetly to bring influence to bear on legislation that better favoured children both at home or overseas.

He was a fearless spokesperson. His strong leadership, authority and convictions were qualities matched by those of the Princess Royal, Save the Children's President. Together over 10 years, they worked to build a reputation for the Fund as an experienced and respected authority on development issues.

The contradiction of his life was that he gave so much for others and perhaps left not enough time for himself. Professionally he was a very private person, finding it difficult to articulate his feelings to his closest colleagues. Even after the

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He was perhaps reminded of the frustration of his teenage years, when, as an outstanding treble at Salisbury Cathedral School, his voice, after breaking, failed to become the expected mature tenor depriving him of a possible choral scholarship. However, life as a chorister imbued spiritual convictions which underpinned his life; and which were reflected in both his public and private worlds. His clear sense of service was shown in his support and membership of a wide range of organisations, including directing the Edington Music Festival 1965-70, and chairing the forum panel at the Royal Society of Arts where he was a leading Fellow from 1981 until his death.

Characteristically Hinton emerged from the disappointment over the Millennium Commission with enormous dignity and took his talents to serve as the founder and President of the International Crisis Group, a London-based organisation working discreetly to intervene to prevent conflict. His work with ICG built on his already extensive global connections to implement the Dayton Agreements. His integrity, honesty and fierce intellect commanded respect

volte-face of the Millennium Commission in October 1994, who appointed him as their first Chief Executive only to undergo a change of mind, he said lightly. But it must have come very hard and to all who knew him it was an extraordinary turn of events for a man with such an extraordinary record of successful leadership and wide experience.

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Hinton: 'tough but honourable'

Photograph: UPPA

from the international statesman and women who worked with him to build a safer, more peaceful world.

Deborah, his devoted wife, was a constant source of support in a hectic and varied life: both she and his daughter Josie, provided Nicholas with a haven of calm and tranquillity amidst a schedule that proved to be too much. Nicholas was a man of big visions whose humour, sense of fun (particularly his colourful socks), and determination will be greatly missed.

Andrew Hutchinson

Nicholas John Hinton, charity administrator: born 15 March 1942; Assistant Director, Northorpe Hall Trust 1965-68; Assistant Director, National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders 1968-73; Director 1973-77; Director, National Council for Voluntary Organisations (formerly National Council of Social Service) 1977-84; CBE 1985; Director-General, Save the Children Fund 1985-94; President, International Crisis Group 1995-96; married 1971 Deborah Vivian (one daughter); died Split, Croatia 20 January 1997.

Anniversaries

Birthdays

Newman, President, Royal College of General Practitioners, 68; Sir Alfred Ramsey, former football manager, 77; Mrs Claire Rayner, journalist and broadcaster, 66; Mrs Gillian Shepherd MP, Secretary of State, Education and Employment, 57; Miss Ann Sotherton, actress, 88; Sir Michael Sporer MP, 54; Sir Hilary Tobin, former High Court judge, 85; Sir Graham Wilkins, former chairman and chief executive, Thorn EMI, 73.

Lectures

Royal Society Science Lecture, National Portrait Gallery: Professor Angus Buchanan, "Images of the Brunels: a dynasty of engineers", 1.10pm.

Michael Faraday Lecture, Royal Society, London SW1: Professor Steve Jones, "What Sex Really Means", 5.30pm.

painter, 1942. On this day, the Falkland Islands were ceded to Britain by Spain, 1771; Ramsay MacDonald, the first Labour prime minister, took office, 1924. Today is the Feast Day of St Anastasius the Persian, St Beilissa, St Dominus of Ramsey, St Beilissa, St Dominus of Ramsey, St Vincent of Saragossa.

Royal Engagements

The Princess Royal visits the British Geological Survey, Keyworth, Nottingham; as President, the Princess Royal Trust for Carers, visits the new Carlton Police District Headquarters, Nottingham; and as Patron, the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, gives a dinner for Corporate Heads at Buckingham Palace. The Duke of Kent, Patron, the Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, presents the Cheney Gold Medal to the Marquess of Anglesey, London SW1.

Changing of the Guard

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

Owing to pressure on space, the LAW REPORT has been held over.

DEATHS

DOYLE: Martin Williams, partner of Solange and grilling, guardian "father" to Ra, unexpectedly on 17 January, at home, Barton St David, Somerset. Creative jeweller, born 11 November 1948, in Epsom, "Dove of Flowers". Devoted, lovely, unique and sympathetic partner, guardian, brother and a best friend to many, who loved and will miss him deeply. Funeral at St Peter's, West London, Somerset, Saturday 25 January at 2.30pm.

MANSFIELD COOPER: On 17 January 1997, passed peacefully away in Huddersfield Hospital, Huddersfield, at home, Barton St David, Somerset. Creative jeweller, born 11 November 1948, in Epsom, "Dove of Flowers". Devoted, lovely, unique and sympathetic partner, guardian, brother and a best friend to many, who loved and will miss him deeply. Funeral at St Peter's, West London, Somerset, Saturday 25 January at 2.30pm.

PIPERS: Myfanwy, died peacefully at home, on Saturday 18 January 1997.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

Care Appeal may be sent care of William Peacock & Sons, Orchard Lane, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE18 6QU.

MASON: Ronald Charles Frederick, on 16 January 1997, in hospital. Funeral Service at All Souls' Church, Langham Place, London W1, Tuesday 28 January, at 11am. Family flowers only please, donations to the Actors Benevolent Fund. Enquiries to J.H. Kenyon Ltd, 0171-937 0757.

PIPERS: Myfanwy, died peacefully at home, on Saturday 18 January 1997.

Family funeral. A celebration will take place later.

RODGERS: Sir Tobias, Bt, died 19 January 1997, in his 57th year, at Warwick Avenue, London W1. The funeral will be held at the Church of St John the Evangelist, Groombridge Road, at 12 noon on Friday 24 January.

WOLLAM: On 19 January 1997, in Worthing, Margaret Leonora, wife of the late David Wollam, adored mother of Christopher, Leonora, Katherine and Victoria, and grandmother of Hannah, Richard, Georgina, Duncan, Leonora and Elizabeth. Funeral service at Worthing Crematorium, Flinton, on Friday 31 January at 3pm. Family flowers only please, but if desired donations made payable to FU Uni, Worthing Hospital, c/o F.A. Holland & Son, 16 Station Parade, Tarring Road, Worthing, Telephone 01903 248951.

IN MEMORIAM

POLIAKOFF: Alexander, OBE, A Memorial Gathering for Alex, who died on 26 July 1996, will be held at the Savile Club, London, on Tuesday 18 March, 6pm to 8.30pm. Entrance by invitation only. Telephone 015 951 3485. Fax 015 951 3563.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephone 0171-293 2011 fax 0171-293 2012 or faxed to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements and any charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

Miss Mary Hayley Bell, playwright, 86; Admiral Sir Lindsay Bryson, Lord-Lieutenant for East Sussex, 72; Sir John Cotton, former diplomat, 88; Sir Charles Davis, former Counsel to the Speaker, 88; Mr George Foreman, heavyweight boxing champion, 49; Miss Ann Goddard QC, circuit judge, 61; Miss Margaret Hall, head of design, British Museum, 61; Professor Cyril Hoxburgh, physicist, 73; Lord Hughes, former Minister of State for Scotland, 86; Mr John Hurt, actor, 57; Mr John Last, arts patron and director, Public Affairs, North West Water Group, 57; Baroness Lockwood, former President, Birkbeck College, 73; Miss Elizabeth Lynne MP, 49; Dr Lotte

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business & city

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BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

Royal Bank spearheads Internet revolution

Jill Treanor
Banking Correspondent

Royal Bank of Scotland will spearhead a revolution in banking in the spring with the launch of the first fully-fledged Internet service. The move by RBS steals a march on its high street rivals, most of which are only experimenting with a direct-linked home banking service.

TSB has offered home banking since last year, and Barclays is working towards the launch of a similar service. Access to both services, however, is restricted and will not be available on the Internet.

RBS does not expect a mad dash to take up the service and intends to offer Internet banking to 500,000 telephone customers initially. Providing they have the necessary equipment customers will be able to conduct a variety of banking services through the Internet, such

as printing out bank details, displaying balances and statements, viewing standing orders and direct debits and paying bills to more than 750 companies.

Customers will be able to transfer money between accounts held at RBS, and transfer financial data to accounting packages such as Microsoft Money 97 and spreadsheets.

Customers will need a personal computer with Microsoft Windows technology and access to the Internet to use the system. RBS will charge £1.50 a month to bank via the Internet, after a free trial period of six months.

This surprised some analysts. Such as Claus Nehmzow, principal at Booz Allen & Hamilton, a consultancy firm, who points out that the benefit for banks of offering services on the Internet is that it is cheap.

Mr Nehmzow has calculated that Internet and other virtual

banking channels have a significantly lower cost structure than traditional methods, so that, for instance, banks on the Internet can operate at expense ratio of 15 to 20 per cent compared with 60 per cent for the average bank.

RBS defended its decision to charge for the system. "We put a lot of investment into it and we hope we're providing a system that customers want," said Bill Bourgoud, head of electronic services with RBS's retail banking services.

"It is a modest charge. We're absolutely committed to maintaining a competitive package." He declined to reveal the amount of investment put into the system but such services are generally estimated to cost between £1m and £2m to set up.

According to Booz Allen & Hamilton, the operating cost basis is also low in terms of maintaining the Internet sites.

RBS said it had overcome one of the main barriers to providing Internet banking - security for users. Mr Bourgoud

said this had been of paramount importance to RBS and that its security system was "extremely robust" and had been checked by experts who worked for the Ministry of Defence.

All customer data is scrambled to ensure privacy and cannot be added, deleted, replayed or tampered with. The central computer server is also firewalled from inside and out, providing a protective barrier between the internal network and the Internet.

Customers will need passwords to use the system and their PCs will need to be registered. RBS said it was so confident about security that if customers had taken care to keep their security details secret, they would not be liable for any transactions on their accounts which they had not authorised.

Around 11 per cent of adults in the UK use the Internet but this proportion is expected to es-

calate to such an extent that Mr Nehmzow estimated that 80 per cent of European banks would provide a full banking service over the Internet within three years.

He said that 15 per cent of American customers would conduct at least some of the banking activities via the Internet by 2000. While Europeans were slower to catch on, Mr Nehmzow said banks on this side of the Atlantic believed that 10 to 20 per cent was not an unrealistic target for this period.

The first users were more likely to be young because they had access to the Internet. Mr Nehmzow said.

Such forecasts for the use of the Internet are further evidence of the radical change under way in banking in Britain and provide further proof that the days of visiting a bank manager in a branch are over.

Comment, page 19

Tesco to expand shopping trial in cyberspace

Tesco is to extend its Internet home shopping trial to five new areas following an encouraging performance at its pilot scheme in Osterley, west London, writes Nigel Cope. New services will start in Hammersmith and Leeds next month. Lea Valley in north-west London and Romford, Essex, will follow after Easter. A trial in Sutton, Surrey, will start in the spring.

Tim Mason, Tesco's marketing director says: "We are excited about the results in Osterley. We want to find out if it is something special to that area or if it can be replicated elsewhere."

Tesco claims that the Osterley trial has

attracted "hundreds" of devotees with the average purchase double that achieved in a regular store.

Half of the customers have been ordering via phone or fax. The remainder have been ordering through the Internet option, a higher proportion than expected.

"We're really pleased with the response from customers," Tesco said. "People are ordering across the product range not just the staple products, but fresh meat, fruit and vegetables too."

Tesco launched its Internet shopping trial last October, offering the service to holders of its Clubcard loyalty scheme.

Customers can choose from 20,000 product lines, the same as in a normal store. They pay a £5 fee for delivery.

Tesco is the most advanced of the big supermarkets in home shopping. Sainsbury's is also conducting trials and has links with a home delivery company in south London called Fanagans. Tesco's Tim Mason said the aim was to help customers to shop "without the physical effort of shopping".

Users of the Tesco service say it can take up to two hours to place the first order as the system is unfamiliar. After that the process can take only 15 minutes.

Boeing calls halt on \$7bn super-jumbo project

Michael Harrison

Boeing dropped a bombshell on the aviation industry yesterday by shelving plans to build a stretched version of its 747 jumbo jet, claiming that the market was too small to justify the \$7bn (£4.2bn) cost of the programme.

The announcement took observers by surprise and, for the time being at least, leaves Airbus Industrie as the only jet manufacturer preparing to launch a super-jumbo.

The proposed 747-500X and 600X family of jets would have been capable of carrying 550 passengers - 140 more than the biggest 747 currently flying - and would have entered service in 2001. The aircraft would

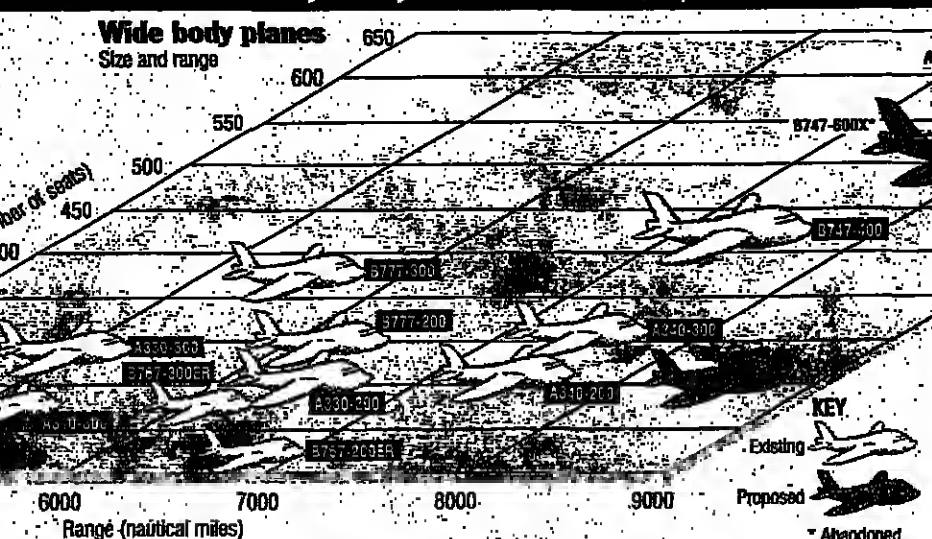
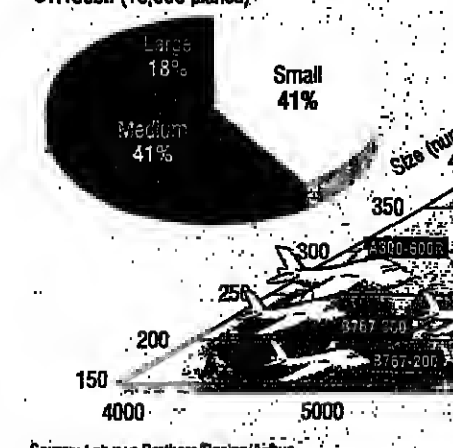
have cost \$210m. The Airbus A3XX family has a payload of 555-650 seats and would be priced at \$198m.

Despite twice delaying the launch of the programme, Boeing had been expected to give the go-ahead later this year. However, Ron Woodward, president of the Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, said yesterday: "Sufficient market demand has not yet developed to justify committing the significant investment required to develop larger versions of the 747."

Boeing estimates the market for aircraft with more than 500 seats at 470 whereas Airbus puts demand at just under 1,400. Airbus says the A3XX will cost \$8bn to build but Bo-

The battle for supremacy as manufacturers jockey for share of \$1,000bn market

Commercial jet market forecast deliveries 1996 to 2015
\$1,130bn (16,000 planes)



ing claims the cost will be nearer \$20bn because it is an all-new aircraft.

Mr Woodward said that Boeing had decided instead to concentrate on developing new versions of its twin-engine wide-bodied family of aircraft the 767 and the 777. All but a small number of the 1,000 or so engineers that had been working on the 747-600X programme are being redeployed to other areas of the company.

Boeing has not, however, jettisoned the super-jumbo altogether, saying it would continue to study airplanes capable

of carrying more passengers than today's 747.

"This remains one of the priorities of our product-development efforts," Mr Woodward said. "When the market develops for such an aircraft, we will be ready."

An Airbus spokesman said: "The feedback we have been getting from the market is that airlines are interested in a new technology, state-of-the-art aeroplane. The A3XX can offer that, whereas the stretched 747 does not necessarily fit the bill."

The 747-600X would have

been based on an airframe that dates back to the 1960s in design.

In recent months, Boeing had been under increasing pressure from potential airline customers to upgrade the proposed aircraft and put fly-by-wire technology into its cockpit. This had forced it to raise its cost projections from \$5bn to \$7bn.

At the same time Boeing was finding it difficult to pin down launch customers for the aircraft. Although it had letters of intent from Thai Airways and Malaysian Airlines to buy about

20 jets, the prize it was looking for was a launch order from Singapore Airlines or, better still, British Airways.

BA, however, had made it clear that it had other priorities to deal with than adding a super-jumbo to its fleet. BA is concentrating instead on gaining approval for the transatlantic tie-up with American Airlines and achieving its goal of £1bn in cost savings.

Despite yesterday's announcement from Boeing, aviation observers doubt that it has given up on the super-jumbo market. Indeed, there was

some speculation that it may have made the announcement to sow doubts in the minds of airline customers about the need for the Airbus A3XX.

The two manufacturers have been playing a cat and mouse game over whether and when they will launch their rival programmes for the last four years. At one stage the four Airbus partners - British Aerospace, Aerospatiale of France, Daimler Benz of Germany and Spain's Casa - conducted joint studies with Boeing.

Boeing has a monopoly in the jumbo market with orders

for the latest version, the 747-400, standing at 482. About a third of its profits are reckoned to come from this one aircraft.

The 747-500X would have a payload of 450 passengers and a range of more than 8,500 miles. The 747-600X would have slightly more range but one-third more payload.

On current planning, the A3XX is due to enter service in 2003. Airbus is due to gain authorisation to begin offering the aircraft to customers late next year and formally launch the programme in 1999.

Comment, page 19

Pound drives home Clarke's dilemma

Diane Coyle and Nic Cunniff

Export orders have started to suffer because of the strength of the pound, according to a survey published by the Confederation of British Industry yesterday. But separate figures showing strong mortgage demand highlighted the Chancellor's dilemma over interest rates.

Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, signalled earlier this week that he had advised higher borrowing costs to tame consumer demand despite the recent rise in the pound. Mortgage figures from the Building Societies Association, showing that new lending grew nearly 50 per cent last year, underlined the Bank's concerns yesterday.

However, the CBI said the decision was "finely balanced". Ross Buckland, chief executive of food group Unigate and a member of the CBI's economic affairs committee, said: "We say, looking at all the elements, that no interest rate rise is justified at present."

Paul Mortimer-Lee, chief

economist at investment bank Paribas, said: "It is a choice between two evils. Either interest rates are going to be too low or the exchange rate is going to be too high."

The CBI's quarterly survey of manufacturers showed that export orders had levelled off for the first time since October 1993. Manufacturers' optimism about exports had also fallen.

The survey showed output had grown steadily over the past four months, although its rate of growth had slowed. General business optimism was steady, and there was a sharp rise in the balance of companies expecting to increase rather than reduce their prices. Domestic demand for consumer goods in particular was still improving.

Fresh evidence of the housing market recovery came from the Building Societies Association. It said net lending in 1996 reached £13.24bn, up 48 per cent on the previous year.

In the final quarter of last year, societies' net advances, at almost £4bn, were 95 per cent up on the fourth quarter of 1995. Although net advances dipped

slightly to £1.2bn in December, they were up 50 per cent on the same month last year.

The British Bankers' Association said mortgage lending rose by £552m, compared to £606m in November and a six-monthly average of £571m.

But Dharshini David, UK economist at HSBC Markets, said seasonally-adjusted net new commitments, the amount of future lending pledged by building societies, was expected to reach 48,000 in December, the lowest in five months.

"The figures reveal tentative signs of a weakening of mortgage demand," she said. "This could reflect the disappearance of many fixed-rate mortgage packages following the base rate rise on 30 October."

Separate figures showing an unexpected drop of £3.8m in total bank lending in December muddled the picture. Even though a large part of the fall was due to end-year transactions in the gilts, underlying loans were weak. The growth rate of M4, the broad money measure, fell to 9.6 from 10.8 per cent in November.

Greenspan applauds 'breathtaking' climb



Good news: Alan Greenspan was upbeat about the US economy although he warned about inflationary pressures

David Osborne
New York

Alan Greenspan, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve, yesterday cheered US financial markets with a broadly upbeat assessment of the American economy even as he raised a warning flag about his concerns that renewed inflationary pressures may be around the corner.

In a testimony on Capitol Hill, Mr Greenspan also defended comments he made in December about "irrational exuberance" in the US equity markets. The remark, which sent tremors through Wall Street at the time, "was not a shot from the hip", he insisted. The performance of the markets, he said yesterday, remained "breathtaking".

Translating Mr Greenspan's words as favourable news, investors yesterday gave a new lift to the Dow Jones industrial average which has continued to soar into record territory since the new year. After sagging more than 40 points at the start of trading, the index was showing a 50-point gain after Mr Greenspan's comments.

Noting the continued stable growth of the US economy, Mr Greenspan told the US Senate that the economy "has retained

considerable vigour, with few signs of imbalances and inflationary tensions that have disrupted past expansions". He reported that the economy grew about 3 per cent last year.

The Chairman attributed the absence of inflationary pressure and low wage growth on several factors, in particular a continuing sense of job insecurity in the US workplace that was keeping wage pressures down. He added high US imports, increased deregulation, the declining influence of the unions and a sharp slowdown in the rise of healthcare costs.

There was a clear warning in his testimony, however, that wages could begin to succumb to upward pressures at any time, which could feed into higher inflation. "The recent pick-up in some measures of wages suggests that the transition may be already running its course," Mr Greenspan warned. The jobless rate in the US is at a seven-year low of only 5.3 per cent.

Mr Greenspan also reminded listeners that in setting monetary policy, the Fed always had to look roughly six months into the future. This was in part because there was always a time lag of about the same period before any interest rate adjustment began to hit.

That was taken by many analysts as a clear signal of the Fed's readiness to tighten monetary conditions at the first real sign of an uptick in wages and inflation. "Greenspan is clearly preparing the market for a possible tightening move. He leaves no question about that," said David Jones, an analyst with Aubrey Lansdon.

The next meeting of the Fed's Open Market Committee, which sets interest rates, is scheduled for 3-4 February, by which time more data will be available to indicate whether new inflationary dangers are indeed gathering.

Addressing the extraordinary enthusiasm of Wall Street, Mr Greenspan remarked that the "stock market continued to climb at a breathtaking rate". He was forced on to the defensive about his "irrational exuberance" quip of last December by some aggressive questioning from senators.

"It was not a shot from the hip," Mr Greenspan said, explaining that he had been trying to lay out all the various factors that had to be taken into account by the Fed in determining monetary policy.

"We thought long and in detail that any such statement could very well have immediate market effects."

STOCK MARKETS					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low
FTSE 100	4195.50	+1.50	+0.0	4207.70	3832.30
FTSE 250	4570.10	-10.10	-0.2	4583.40	4015.30
FTSE 350	2081.80	-0.40	-0.0	2087.70	1816.60
FT Small Cap	2282.42	-4.22	-0.2	2287.08	1954.06
FT All Share	2065.17	-0.65	-0.0	2061.07	1791.99
New York	5888.51	+44.64	+0.7	5895.87	5032.94
Daily	17358.16	-122.18	-0.7	22965.80	17933.65
Hong Kong	13732.79	-135.45	-1.0	13868.24	10204.87
Frankfurt	2376.71	-53.97	-1.8	3030.86	2253.36

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES					
Short sterling*	UK medium gilt*	US long bond	Money Market Rates	Bond Yields (%)	Year Ago
1 Month	7.75	7.75	6.06	6.75	7.42
3 Months	7.75	7.75	5.31	5.78	6.55
6 Months	7.75	7.75	4.44	4.41	4.42
1 Year	7.75	7.75	3.06	3.13	3.79

CURRENCIES					
£/\$	£/DM	£/¥	Pound	Dollar	Other Indicators
1.6627	0.6914	0.0019	1.5627	0.6914	Oil Brent \$ 22.21
1.5830	0.5942	0.0019	1.5830	0.5942	Gold \$ 363.50
2.7001	1.6240	1.2711	2.7001	1.6240	Gold £ 212.48
1.9574	1.0161	1.0022	1.9574	1.0161	

27% Somerfield rise leaves investors cool

Maiden results from Somerfield, the supermarket group whose summer flotation was dogged by problems, were yesterday greeted with a cool response from investors and analysts, writes Nigel Cope.

Announcing a 27 per cent rise in half-year profits to £54.6m, Somerfield's chief executive, David Simons, said the group was "delivering the goods".

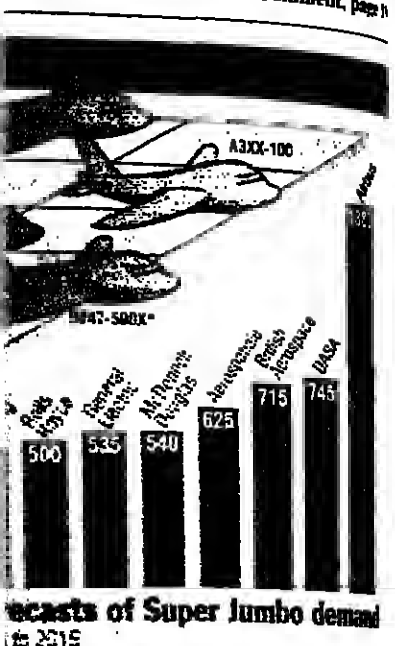
However, analysts pointed to a weak like-for-like sales increase of just 1.7 per cent as evidence that Somerfield remained a weak player in a highly competitive sector. Several down-

graded their full-year profits forecasts to around £100m as the shares fell 5.5p to 168.5p.

Investment column, page 21

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king' climb

That was taken by many
as a sign of a new era
in the history of the
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of the 1000 units has
led to a second order
for 1000 units, which
is expected to be delivered
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The success of the 1000
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Somerfield rise s investors cool

The investment climate
is expected to be more
positive in the future.
The success of the 1000
units has led to a second
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in the next few weeks.



COMMENT
First Bank of
Scotland with
Sainsbury's, now
Royal Bank with
Internet banking
- the Scots seem
to be leading their
larger rivals south
of the border at
the cutting edge
of banking
developments

Banking comes under threat from the Internet

It's retail banking as we know and hate it. A basically finished, caput, over the hill, obsolete and dead? Perhaps not quite yet but certainly that is the implication of yesterday's announcement from the Royal Bank of Scotland of Britain's first fully fledged Internet bank. Quicker, more convenient, and above all, far less costly, Internet banking is the future. According to recent research from Booz Allen & Hamilton, the management consultants, up to 16 per cent of US households will be using Internet banking by the turn of the century.

Furthermore, because these people will be drawn mainly from upper-income brackets, they could account for perhaps as much as 30 per cent of retail banking profitability. The only restraint on growth is that of PC and AppleMac ownership.

Don't get too carried away yet, however. Royal Bank's Internet facility is for the time being only for analysts. Far from being cheaper than traditional banking, it is more expensive. Royal is planning an extra charge for those who sign up to the new service, on top of all the other charges normally associated with a personal bank account. Indeed, the only apparent advantage of Royal's Internet bank as it stands over telephone banking is that the seasoned traveller will be able to transact banking business via their laptop for the price of a local phone call, rather than having to fork out the full long-distance charge.

None the less, it is a start, and Royal Bank

should perhaps be congratulated for beating the English cleaners to the mark. First Bank of Scotland with Sainsbury's, now Royal Bank with Internet banking - the Scots seem to be leading their larger rivals south of the border at the cutting edge of banking developments. For Internet banking to take off, however, it requires a new player to enter the market capable of reflecting the dramatically lower costs of the Internet in its charging structure. That, or for an established bank to set up a ring-fenced Internet banking operation, like Midland with its telephone banking set-up, First Direct.

The difficulty of Internet banking for the traditional players is that it only adds to costs, it is yet another service they are obliged to offer customers alongside branch and telephone banking.

According to Booz Allen, the average cost per banking transaction through the branch network is 60p. With telephone banking it is 35p. The cost through traditional computer banking is 17p. And then there's the Internet - just 5p. The cost-to-income ratio of the best of the high street banks is around 50 per cent. With a pure Internet bank it could be as low as 15 per cent. Unencumbered by the high-cost branch network and infrastructure of the traditional banks, the pure Internet bank can undercut with abandon.

Nor are the extraordinary cost advantages of Internet banking the only thing the traditional high street banks have to fear. In

theory, Internet banking allows services presently bolted together under one roof to be unbundled, allowing the customer to become promiscuous with his business. It might be possible, for instance, to chase the best deposit and borrowing rates automatically on their customer base. Instead the financial profile of customers would become the property of middle-men and software providers, with the result that banks would have to compete genuinely for business and custom. Retail banking would become much more like wholesale banking.

What Royal Bank of Scotland is doing, then, is opening Pandora's Box. Provided Internet banking can be adequately regulated and controlled, provided it can be made as secure as its exponents claim, it promises to usher in a much more competitive age in retail banking. That probably also means a rather less profitable one. From a customer perspective this is obviously a good thing. Given that the process is pretty much inevitable, there may also be some merit even for Royal Bank's shareholders in being first away from the starting blocks. Barclays, for one, is in rapid pursuit.

that, but it rarely does long-term damage to those it is directed at. And promiscuity, well that's just the way some people are. Betrayal, though, that's something else. It's dark, sordid, sneaky and dishonest. And that is how Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, and most of his party feel about some of Britain's leading industrialists.

Ever since he was elected leader, Tony Blair has been attempting to break the traditional unholy link between business and the Tory Party. As yesterday's events demonstrated, he's achieved some success. None of the industrialists at yesterday's IPPR conference could ever have been described as among the Tory Party's most loyal and natural supporters, but the fact that they could share the same platform as Tony Blair and put their names to a new business agenda that carries the Labour Party leadership's official blessing, marks a significant change of approach.

In truth there is probably quite a lot in the IPPR-sponsored document that Mr Heseltine himself would agree with. There is plenty else, however, which ought to be alien, not just to the Tory Party, but to these businessmen too. For anyone who believes in free markets, there could be nothing more ridiculous than the commission's proposal that all investment funds should be forced to contribute to a Council for Institutional Investors, that would monitor and presumably punish underperforming companies. The council, it should be said, is only the

most extreme tip of a series of rigid and wholly inappropriate corporate governance proposals.

But it is not this that Mr Heseltine is so fired up about. The real cause of his anger is that these people could so nonchalantly turn their backs on the most overtly pro-business administration to have ruled Britain this century: the administration that freed them from daily trench warfare with the trade unions, that deregulated everything in sight, that privatised everything that wasn't bolted down, and most things that were.

He's right to see it as betrayal for that is exactly what it is. Bob Ayling of British Airways, good friend of Jack Straw though he is, doesn't actually believe in Labour any more than he believes in the Tories. He's backing the party he thinks most likely to win the next election, and so he is doing he is hoping to influence Mr Blair and bend him towards his own ends.

Betrayal? Well, yes, but even Mr Heseltine knows that it is also good business. If a lot of silly corporate governance rules is part of the price that has to be paid for steering Labour away from some rather more damaging policy initiatives, so be it.

There is plenty of realpolitik in the way the business community is cosyng up to Mr Blair. They may not like Labour but they are resigned to it forming the next government and need to make some accommodation.

Mr Heseltine's may be a lost cause but at least he is prepared to go down fighting.

Neau geau! Government blocks French bid for Mid Kent water

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent



Drained: Mid Kent chief executive Geoff Baldwin

Directors of Mid Kent Holdings, one of the 19 smaller drinking water companies, were celebrating yesterday after the Government blocked a hostile takeover approach launched jointly by two French companies, General Utilities and Saur, the French companies, respectively own the neighbouring Folkestone and Dover Water Services and South East Water.

The move by Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, to ban the takeover came after an investigation by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission found such a deal would be against the public interest. The announcement sent Mid Kent shares plunging by 10 per cent from 635p to 572.5p.

Clearly relieved at the deci-

The MMC's conclusions end months of uncertainty for Mid Kent, which has spent an estimated £2m defending itself. Its controversial campaign played on the fears of French control, warning up with the westerly if unsuitable slogans "Eau Neau You Deant'it" and "How Lean can you get?"

The dispute began when Saur and General Utilities, which together own 38 per cent of Mid Kent shares, asked to buy Mid Kent as part of a plan to maximise scarce water resources in the South-east.

As the row deepened, directors of Mid Kent accused their French-controlled counterparts of acting in concert at the company's AGM, held last May. The French had voted down a bonus scheme devised by Mid Kent for senior executives. The allegations persuaded the DTI to ex-

tend the MMC probe from September to December.

In his statement yesterday, Mr Lang backed the advice of the water regulator, Ian Byatt, that the takeover would not solve Kent's severe water problems. Saur and General Utilities, which is part of the vast Compagnie Generale des Eaux group, had wanted to construct a mini water grid across the region. They had complained that Mid Kent had the area's only reservoir, which it jointly owns with Southern Water.

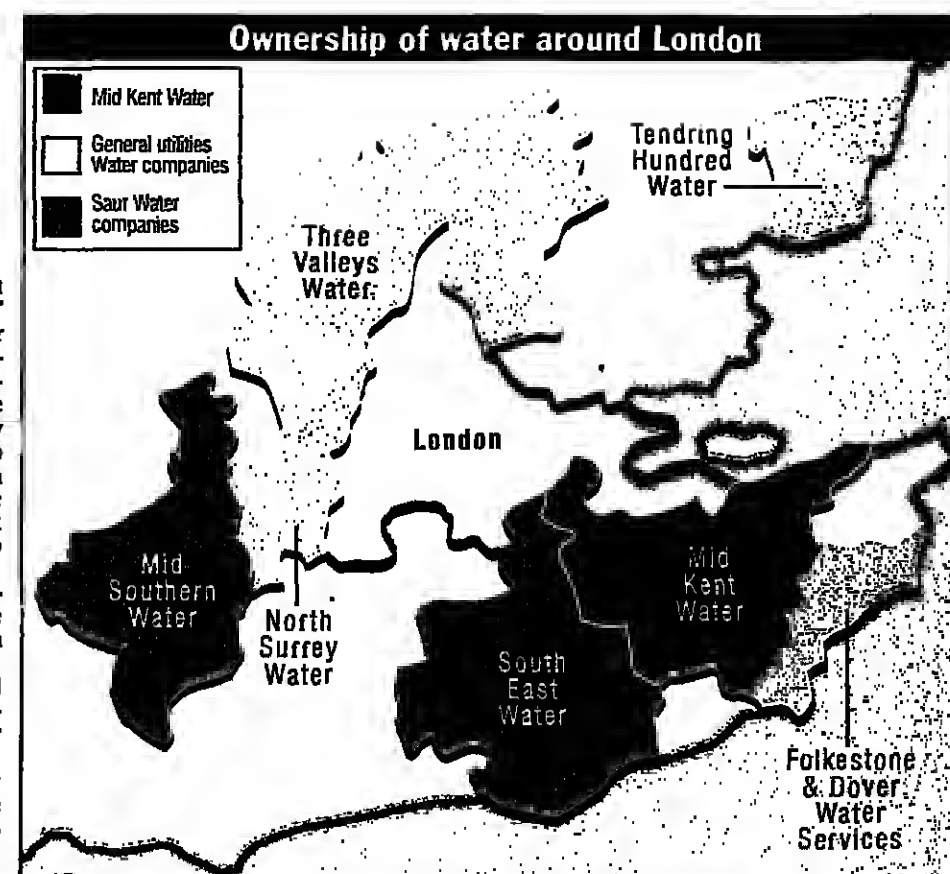
However Mr Byatt said there could be no solution to the difficulties in a county which has as little rainfall as parts of Africa unless Southern Water, the region's water and sewerage company, was included. He said yesterday: "Now that the merger has been blocked it is important that Ofwat, working

closely with the Environment Agency, can sort this issue out."

The findings also backed Mr Byatt's opinion that water company takeovers could prejudice his ability to make efficiency comparisons, a view which set Ofwat against the two takeover bids last year for South West Water. Mr Byatt said he was pleased the Government had endorsed this belief. "No remedy would outweigh the loss to the regulator of a comparator and the reduction in the potential for competition in the area."

However Mr Lang stopped short of asking Saur and General Utilities to reduce their stakes in Mid Kent.

Last night a spokeswoman for the two bidders said: "In the great scheme of things this is a small deal for the French. It is by no means a calamity."



Millwall FC's parent collapses

Nigel Cope

The wave of euphoria over publicly quoted football received a harsh dose of reality yesterday when Millwall Holdings, the parent company of the second division team, moved to protect itself from creditors by calling in administrators.

The decision came late in a fraught day for the south London club during which dealings in Millwall shares were suspended on the stock market pending further details about the club's financial position. Millwall's shares were suspended at 4p, valuing the club

at £14m. It is now likely that the club's broker, Townsley & Co, will launch a rescue rights issue to raise around £6m to refinance the club. Full details will be revealed later today.

City sources were uncertain how the Millwall collapse might affect Newcastle. United's £200m flotation planned for later this year. One broker said: "I don't think it's fair to tar everyone with the same brush. But it does show that it is not all roses for everyone."

Millwall's problems centre on the club's high costs which include a large playing squad. Peter Mead, chairman, said the

club had been living beyond its means. "For years now we have been gearing up for Premier League football. On a number of occasions we have come close, but failed. Sadly, we were relegated last year but we are still being run as a Premier League club with all the costs that involves."

"We have decided to refinance once and for all, to allow us to carry on and avoid selling our best players which was becoming debilitating."

In November, Millwall reported full-year operating losses of £3.4m while turnover was also down. Millwall's problems

show that in spite of the stampede towards the stock market by football clubs, a flotation is not the panacea to all financial problems.

One source close to Millwall said yesterday: "If you're in the Premier League then you get a lot of money from TV and other sources. But if you get relegated the money is not so good."

Millwall went public in 1989, one of the first football clubs to seek a listing. In recent years there has been a flurry of new listings including Chelsea, Sunderland and Leeds United, which is part of the Caspian Group.

Nissan in profit as new UK car is confirmed

Chris Godsmark

Nissan, the Japanese car giant, yesterday reversed predictions of losses from its UK operations as the company confirmed plans to build a third model range at its Sunderland factory by the turn of the millennium.

The investment is likely to create 800 new jobs at Sunderland, along with an estimated 2,700 further jobs in UK components suppliers and 1,300 additional jobs on the Continent.

Nissan said its British subsidiary was now likely to declare a small profit for last year, confounding management's previous forecast of losses due to the cost of re-tooling production lines for the replacement for the Primera.

A Nissan spokesman said: "That prediction now looks unduly pessimistic. Production was better than expected last year so we can take a more positive outlook." The official figures will be revealed in May.

The news reinforces the starkly opposing fortunes of UK car producers, as Ford proceeds with plans to slash 1,300 jobs at Halewood on Merseyside. Ford's share of the British market slumped below 20 per cent last year for the first time and its European manufactur-

ing operations, hit by huge overcapacity, slid further into the red.

The decision by Nissan's Japanese management to build the new car in Sunderland came after years spent deliberating about the costs of rival plants across its worldwide empire. Only last summer Ian Gibson, chief executive of Nissan GB, had said he personally did not believe the car, a replacement for the Escort sized Almera, would be made in the UK.

The change of heart came because of recent dramatic efficiency strides at Sunderland, which have raised productivity by 10 per cent each year since 1993. Sunderland takes 10 hours to make a Primera and just 8.5 hours to build a Miera, putting the plant at the very top of the productivity league in the UK.

"We must recognise that it is through the efficiency and productivity of the workers there that we have been able to demonstrate levels of efficiency that are amongst the best in the world," said Mr Gibson.

Another consideration was the gradual revival in the European car market. Last year the Sunderland site made 231,000 Micras and Primers, higher than the original forecast of about 215,000.

IN BRIEF

- Nynex CableComms, one of the UK's largest cable telephone and television companies, reported a fall in annual losses to £63.1m last year from £72.1m in 1995. The reduction came after total revenue surged by 78 per cent to £151m. Residential phone lines grew by 50 per cent, to 350,000, while cable television customers increased by 36 per cent to 268,519. Nynex said it had invested £2.2bn in its UK network so far, with £1bn still to be spent.
- John Kilian, chief executive, refused to be drawn on speculation about delays to the forthcoming £50m merger with Cable & Wireless's Mercury subsidiary, Bell Cablemedia, and the UK operations of Videotron. He said the deal was still on course to be completed in the spring. He confirmed he was not a candidate for the post of chief executive of the new company, C&W Communications, and said he would return to work for the parent company, the US Nynex Corporation, after the merger.
- Seven senior corporate financiers, including two directors, lost their jobs at NatWest Markets' corporate finance department, a result of the acquisition last year of the corporate finance boutique Hambro Magan. The job losses followed a year-end performance review of the 140 combined corporate finance staff, a NatWest spokeswoman said. "There are no more departures in the pipeline," she said. She refused to give the names of those sacked or say how much compensation was involved.
- Business sentiment declined in Germany last month, according to the authoritative Ifo survey. It was the second month running that the index had fallen, reflecting an unexpected loss of momentum in the recovery that started last summer. The fall, from 97.3 in October to 96.9 in November and 95.8 last month, in one of the most reliable indicators of the economy fuelled hopes that the Bundesbank would reduce interest rates, although the majority opinion among economists is that rates will stay on hold.
- Share prices in sports goods retailers were unsettled yesterday after the Office of Fair Trading launched a campaign to expose price-fixing by suppliers of sports clothes and equipment. Blacks Leisure's shares dropped 7.5p to 382.5p, while JJB Sports eased 4p to 284p, and JD Sports, which is due to report results today, closed 16.5p lower at 325p. The OFT said it had received a stream of complaints from sports goods retailers who had been prevented from discounting by manufacturers and distributors insisting that goods must not be sold below a minimum price.
- Rugby Group has acquired the loss-making joinery manufacturer Boulton and Paul (Holdings) from a consortium led by Schroder Ventures for £15.5m with deferred consideration of up to £34.5m dependent on future profits of the combined joinery businesses of B&P and Rugby's own operation, John Carr.

MJN

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- Intel 166MHz Pentium processor with MMX™ Technology (P166MX model) or 166MHz processor manufactured by IBM (P166+ and P166+ TX models)
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- 33.6 V.90+ BAST internal modem
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- 15" or 17" SVGA 0.28mm screens
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P166+ TX model also contains 512K pipeline burst cache, Soundblaster 32 waveable sound card, ATI 2D SDRAM graphics, premium 15w speakers and microphone

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MMX™ Technology

MJN high performance systems feature the latest Intel 166MHz Pentium™ processors with MMX™ technology and high speed IBM P166+ processors to provide you with the ultimate performance. These systems include 32Mb EDO RAM, fast 33.6 modems, large 15" or 17" screens, fast 2.1Gb hard disks and full feature 8 speed multimedia. Our highest performance P166+ TX model also includes Soundblaster 32 waveable sound, ATI SDRAM graphics, 512K burst cache and premium speakers.

Model	Price	Price + VAT
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P166MX Model • 32Mb RAM • 2.1Gb HD • 33.6 Modem	£1395.90	£1188 + VAT
P166+ TX Model • 32Mb RAM • 2.1Gb HD • 33.6 Modem	£1442.90	£1228 + VAT

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market report / shares

Data Bank

FTSE 100

4195.5 + 1.5

FTSE 250

4570.1 - 10.1

FTSE 350

2081.6 - 0.4

SEAQ VOLUME

873.9m shares,

49,018 bargains

Gilts Index

94.75 - 0.28

Share spotlight

share price, pence

270

260

250

240

230

220

210

J F M A M J J A S O N D

BZW bears leave Storehouse firmly on the shelf

The Storehouse retailing group, taking in such chains as BHS and Mothercare, seems unable to avoid the bearish embrace of Barclays de Zoete Wedd. The investment house's highly rated retail analysts, Charles Nichols and Tony Shire, are again advising their followers to dump the shares.

Their sell advice follows what appeared to be a reasonable festive trading statement. The analysts doubt whether in the first 40 weeks of the current year "there is more than a marginal gain in group like-for-like sales, a poor outcome by industry standards".

They have, consequently, reduced their estimate for this year's profits by £5m to £120m. Last year Storehouse produced £108.7m. For next year BZW is looking for £136m.

The group's shares, riding at 361, in May, have since been in a ragged retreat. They

touched a 248p low last month, reflecting earlier negative comment from BZW, but appeared to have gained some strength from a Christmas trading statement and were holding at 275p before the latest BZW hit cut the price to 272p.

The rest of the stock market, after spending most of the session fretting about what Alan Greenspan planned to say, produced a huge sigh of relief when the US banking chief adopted a fairly neutral stance. Last month he said share markets were overheating. His cautionary words had little impact and he had been expected to return to the cool-down theme.

At one time Footsie was down 26.4 points. By the close it had rallied to show a modest gain, up 1.5 points at 4,195.5. Higher interest rate worries, however, are never far below the surface and Bank of England Governor Eddie



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year

George's latest call for an increase to ensure inflation targets are met was an inhibiting influence.

The market had enjoyed much of its recent success on the back of high-flying banks and financials. There are some fears, early signs their heady run is coming to an end which could indicate the bull market is running out of steam.

In the main the bankers more than held their own which gave a little extra momentum to the Greenspan-inspired rally.

Football clubs, for so long hitting new highs, were among the more somnolent shares, reflecting the problems of second

division Millwall, suspended at 4p and in administration. Manchester United, Southampton, Sunderland and Tottenham Hotspur shivered a few coppers lower.

Sports retailers, another boom area, also suffered a relapse after the Office of Fair Trading said it was campaigning against alleged resale price maintenance in the supply of sports goods. Blacks Leisure dipped 7.5p to 382.5p and J David Sports 16.5p to 325p.

Vodafone was the best-performing blue chip. The shares rose 7.5p to 261p after the mobile telephone group produced figures showing a sharp customer increase. It said its over-

seas subscribers had topped 1 million, giving it more than 3.8 million - with 25 per cent added since the start of last year. Orange also dialled the right number, gaining 4p to 197.5p following a HSBC James Capel buy signal.

BT put on 6p to 256p on bottom fishing and Rolls-Royce continued to draw inspiration from hopes of a German deal over its Parsons turbine operation, rising 2.5p to 242p.

Racal Electronics, up 6p to 251p, enjoyed a Credit Lyonnais Laing push but Shell shrugged off a UBS downgrade, climbing 5p to 1,036.5p.

Dorling Kindersley's fall from grace continued with the market fearing more bad news. The price of the CD Rom group fell 29.5p to 375.5p, its lowest for nearly two years.

It has already warned that weak US markets and sterling's

strength were taking their toll. There are fears last month's sales were unspectacular.

Thorn's sad decline continued with a 9.5p fall to 199.5p and Somerfield, the supermarket chain, fell 5.5p to 168.5p, although figures were in line with estimates.

Life Sciences, following the £236m US takeover bid, gained 41.5p to 134p but water group Mid Kent Holdings, after the Whitehall block on the controversial French strike, sank 62.5p to 572.5p.

The 600 Group, a machine tool maker, produced the day's profit warning, falling 55p to 144.5p as a result.

Jarvis, the construction group which has moved into railway maintenance rose 6p to a 160p, a peak. Talk of bids and deals are never far from the company, up from 17.75p a year ago. Monday's big trade in Ronson (22.5p) turned out to be a head and breakfast deal.

Taking Stock

Littlewoods, the pools and retailing group for so long thought to be lining up a deal with Lancia Trust, has set its sights on struggling Jacques Vert. It is taking a 29.9 per cent stake and intends to develop a new mail order catalogue with the fashion group.

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Radio First held at 8p on Otef. It is paying £225,000 down and £500,000 later for three radio stations at Peterborough, Northampton and Cheltenham. The seller is GWR. Other deals are on Radio First's wavelength. The company owns the growing Mellow Radio, expected to break even this year.

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Alcoholic Beverages				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Banks, Merchant				
Barclays	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Scotland	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Ireland	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of London	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Montreal	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of New York	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Paris	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Spain	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Sweden	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Switzerland	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Tokyo	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of West	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of America	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Canada	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of China	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of India	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Japan	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Korea	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Malaysia	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Mexico	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Netherlands	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Norway	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Portugal	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Russia	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Singapore	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of South Africa	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Taiwan	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Thailand	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of United Kingdom	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Vietnam	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Yugoslavia	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Zimbabwe	10.00	0.00	100	100
Banks, Retail				
Bank of America	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Canada	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of China	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of India	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Japan	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Korea	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Malaysia	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Mexico	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Netherlands	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Norway	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Portugal	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Russia	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Singapore	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of South Africa	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Taiwan	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Thailand	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of United Kingdom	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Vietnam	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Yugoslavia	10.00	0.00	100	100
Bank of Zimbabwe	10.00	0.00	100	100
Breweries, Pubs & Rest				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Building Construction				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Building Materials				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Chemicals				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Distributors				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Electricity				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Electronics				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Engineering				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Engineering Vehicles				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Extractive Industries				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Food Manufacturers				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Gas Distribution				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Health Care				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Household Goods				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Insurance				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Internationals				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Index-linked				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100
Undated				
Adnoca	10.00	0.00	100	100
Beck's	10.00	0.00	100	100
Brewery	10.00	0.00	100	100
Carlsberg	10.00	0.00	100	100
Heineken	10.00	0.00	100	100
Johnnie Walker	10.00	0.00	100	100
Miller	10.00	0.00	100	100
Paul Smith	10.00	0.00	100	100
Stout	10.00	0.00	100	100
Watson	10.00	0.00	100	100

سكنا من الامل

business

Taking Stock

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Somerfield still has problems

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

It is hardly surprising that Somerfield laid low for almost six months after what proved to be one of the most fraught issues of recent times. David Simons and his fellow directors probably limped back to their Bristol headquarters severely bruised after their experience, if several million richer.

The cut price float was such a debacle that it made it all the more crucial that the company did not disappoint with yesterday's maiden set of results as a public company. Mr Simons even started his presentation with a slide showing the slogan "delivering the goods".

This was only partly the case. Though half-year profits of £54.6m were in line with expectations and the margin increase to 3.4 per cent was also good news, the longer term prospects still look poor.

The most worrying sign is the group's like-for-like sales performance, where sales in the six months to November were just 1.7 per cent ahead of the same period last year. With food price inflation running at just over 2 per cent, that represents a fall in real terms.

The problem is that though management tries to focus attention on the core Somerfield format, where sales were 4.3 per cent ahead, it is still being dragged back by the underperforming food and Gateway stores and the Food Giant discount format.

Sales are falling off a cliff in both.

Diagnosis: the surface and other problems emerge. Through the conversion of Gateway shops to the Somerfield format yields double digit sales gains in the short term, they soon evaporate. David Simons admitted yesterday that in some of the original Somerfield conversions sales have started to go into reverse. For a company that is hoping to drive profits through higher sales that looks extremely worrying.

To be fair to Somerfield, it is doing some of the right things. It is moving towards higher margin fresh foods and its Europartners buying consortium is helping keep costs lower.

Mr Simons is talking about home shopping trials and financial services but the fact is that rivals such as Tesco and Sainsbury are further ahead, have stronger brands and more funds. Somerfield is always going to be running to catch up.

Shareholders who were bold enough to apply for Somerfield shares last summer eventually got a very good deal at 145p. Though the shares dipped 5.5p to 165.5p yesterday, investors are still looking at a near 10 per cent gain. But that was the easy part. Further advances will be harder to achieve.

Brokers were shading down their full year profit forecasts yesterday to £100m

Shandwick slow to grow

Public relations companies do not have a particularly impressive record on the stock market and there is a plausible line of argument that they should not be publicly quoted at all. There is a good reason for that - when a business's assets go up and down in the lift every day, the quality of earnings they generate is necessarily extremely volatile. Add in the fact that the companies tend to be small, dependent on one country's economy and vulnerable to cuts in discretionary spending and it is a wonder that so many have tried their luck on the stock market.

The volatility of the sector has been no better exemplified than by Shandwick, as dependent as any of its peers on keeping hold of temperamental, expensive staff. In most other regards, it looks dangerously like a proper company, albeit a pretty dull one.

Profits for the 12 months to October, announced yesterday, showed record revenues of £122.3m which resulted in a 20 per cent jump in pre-tax profits to £9.2m. Earnings per share were a slightly better-than-expected 4.9p, allowing the dividend to be lifted 10 per cent to 1.43p for the year.

The main difference between Shandwick and many of its rivals is that it genuinely has a global business, which means it can offer a world-wide communications service to clients. For clients such as Digital and MasterCard, that central control of their international image is very attractive.

Elsewhere, Shandwick's interactive arm, which designs, maintains and markets Web-based communications on the Internet, looks well placed to benefit from the rush by companies to create a presence on the information superhighway.

The trouble with Shandwick is that all this carefully packaged good news is slow to show through. Earnings per share have bounced between 4p and 6p ever since the company recovered from 1991's disastrous losses and the

shares, once they had rocketed from the 4p at which the market had severe doubts about the company's future, have done little in the past three years.

At 55p, up 3p yesterday, the shares made an undemanding price/earnings ratio of 11.1. If growth continues at the current level the shares look reasonably attractive, but given the inherent instability of the business, they are not worth chasing much higher.

More shocks from 600 Group

The 600 Group is a salutary lesson in the need to read between the lines of even apparently positive comments from companies. As recently as November the machine tool maker put out a statement saying: "The UK market has been fairly quiet since the summer but inquiry rates are increasing and we anticipate continued growth during the second half of this financial year and into next." Yesterday a profit warning sent the shares into free fall.

Having peaked at 300p early last summer the shares have been in retreat ever since, proving that the market is often a better guide to a company's fortunes than its own assessment of events. Yesterday's 55p fall to 144.5p represented a 28 per cent slump. It has been some roller-coaster ride - at the beginning of 1994 the shares could have been picked up for 30p.

As ever on the day of a profit warning it is hard to know if the market has over-reacted but given the disparity between the company's growing confidence in November and yesterday's admission that summer weakness "continued during the last quarter of 1996", the market was probably right to be cautious. Analysts took the warning badly yesterday, slashing their forecasts from an average of just over £14m to about £11m for the year to March with £12.3m pencilled in for the following 12 months.

What is puzzling about yesterday's share price fall is that it seems out of all proportion to the scale of the company's problems. Destocking is holding back sales of the company's lathes but profits, while lower than expectations, are still expected to match last year's result. Demand at home is set to improve, 600 said yesterday, and the group's market share should continue to rise in the US and rest of the world.

On the basis of forecast profits, the shares trade on a prospective price/earnings ratio of 10 in the year to March. That is about right until the picture clears.

Amsterdam, home of windmills and gerberas

PEOPLE & BUSINESS



Jetsetter: Judith Marsh flew to Amsterdam for the photo

Here's a marketing wheeze which will appeal to horticulturalists everywhere. Invest On-line, the phone-based investment operation launched last year by Royal Sun Alliance, has named all its five products after flowers.

Thus we have Lotus, Carnation, Azalea, Rose and Daisy. Now the company is launching the Gerbera PEP. Gerberas, for the uninitiated, look like large orange daisies. It was a toss-up between gerberas and tulips, says an On-line spokesman, but the tulip chosen for the photo shoot looked like a boiled egg on a stick.

Judith Marsh, head of the company, had to fly to Amsterdam for the shoot because they couldn't find enough gerberas in one place over here, I'm told. What japes.

Stuart Wallis, chief executive of Fisons until its acquisition by Rhoe-Poulenc Rorer 18 months ago, has been appointed chairman of Euramax International, the aluminium and steel coil maker. Mr Wallis was poached from Bowater to run Fisons around and when he succeeded he made his name. He also has a finger in several other pies as chairman of Schell, Yorkshire Chemicals, Sheffield Forge-masters and LLP.

Good to hear that Terry Venables, whose abilities as manager of the England football team are sadly unmatched by his business acumen, has done a deal. Hay & Robertson, which has made a fortune making replica football kits for the soccer-loving masses, has signed up the coach to the Australian side for a six-and-a-half-year contract to develop a "premium range of products" in conjunction with the Admiral brand.

The El Tel brand will hit the stores this autumn. Who knows, you could soon be wearing Hay & Robertson's El Tel pyjamas and boxer shorts. A chilling thought.

The City is Eurosceptic - it's official. In the annual City

Debate at Mansion House on Monday, hosted by the Futures and Options Association, around 250 members of the City voted heavily against EMU. In fact there were three motions, the first being: "This House believes there is a powerful economic and business case underpinning the political momentum towards economic and monetary union."

Despite powerful Europhile speeches from Peter Sutherland, chairman of Goldman Sachs and a former European Commissioner, and Jan Timmer, president of Philips Electronics, 58 per cent of those present voted against the motion. Only 38 per cent agreed while 4 per cent didn't know.

But the Eurosceptic speakers, Tim Melville Ross, director general of the Institute of Directors, and Anatole Kaletsky, economic editor of *The Times*, didn't have it all their own way.

The second motion was: "Do you think the UK will ever join a single currency?" This time 65 per cent voted yes and 32 per cent no.

Most worrying for fans of Europe, however, was the last motion: "If we don't join a single currency and we are penalised by the EU for not doing so, would you be in favour of leaving the EU?"

Fully 48 per cent said yes, 41 per cent said no with 11 per cent don't know.

Perhaps we could link up with the Cayman Islands.

The spirit of the intrepid British explorer is not dead. Former Warburg spokesman Richard Holloway, now with the Maitland Consultancy, had rather a more dramatic visit to Milan last weekend than he bargained for.

He was flown in on Sunday to help give a gloss to Olivetti's announcement that it was selling its computer operations.

However on his arrival Mr Holloway was told that the airport was surrounded by striking farmers. Undeterred, our hero walked one-and-a-half miles down a deserted motorway through blockades in the rain. "There was quite a party atmosphere," he says.

Thank you to David Wallace of Portfolio & Pension Management, East Kilbride, who writes to me with a list of fund managers for Henderson Investors: these include James Bond and a Mr A Crooke. "Are these appropriate names for fund managers?" asks Mr Wallace. I leave you, dear reader, to judge.

John Willcock

Life Sciences succumbs to £236m offer

Magnus Grimond

Life Sciences International yesterday succumbed to a £236m offer from Thermo Instrument Systems of the US, which claims to be the world's biggest analytical instruments group.

News of the 135p-a-share cash offer sent shares in the London-based scientific instruments group chaired by Sir Christopher Bland soaring 41.5p to 134p. The terms of the offer will allow shareholders to keep a 3p-a-share second interim dividend the group said it planned to declare for last year.

The takeover is the second UK purchase in less than a year for Thermo, which bought Fisons' scientific instruments business in a £154m deal last March. It also comes less than 12 months into a revival plan instituted at Life Sciences by Riccardo Pigliucci, the American chief executive who joined from US scientific instruments group Perkin-Elmer last March with a brief to turn the group round.

If the takeover goes through, it will end four years during which Life Sciences' shares have slumped from a peak of 179p in February 1993. After growing strongly in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the group ran into problems two years ago ranging from a disappointing acquisition to hold-ups with the US medical budget and disruption caused by consolidation amongst the big drug groups which represent its main customers.

In September, Mr Pigliucci announced a plan to split the group into four businesses, which Thermo revealed yesterday would result in a £7m exceptional charge in the 1996 figures. Partially offset by a £3.7m gain from closing out certain foreign exchange contracts, this would leave profits at £23.7m for 1996, the company estimated, below the record £28.5m declared for 1994, but in line with analysts' forecasts.

Mr Pigliucci described the Thermo offer as a good one. "Our major brief was to increase shareholder value, however that happens. We were on our way to achieving a restructuring of the company, but when we got a cash offer at 50 per cent over our share price, you have to think."

He estimated that the company would have had to raise the share price to around 170p to 180p over two years to arrive at an equivalent value to the bid, even before taking account of the risk that the restructuring or the markets might turn sour.

The higher offer was immediately rejected by Cook and drew a mixed reaction from the stock market, with one big shareholder saying it was "not obviously a knock-out".

Triplex shares dropped 11p to 192.5p, while William Cook's gained 5p to 380p. At that level, Cook's shares still remain 5p below the new bid terms of 21 new shares plus £37.40 in cash for every 20 in Cook. There is a cash alternative of 383.4p a share.

Colin Cooke, the Triplex chairman, said they had decided to raise the offer in line with

the original profit forecast of £10.7m for the current year to March, increased over the weekend to £11m. The group has also raised its forecast savings from £1.5m to £2.5m.

The new bid represented an exit price/earnings ratio of 10.8, which is exactly the same as the original terms - "reasonable, [but] not over the top", Mr Cooke claimed.

They had looked at the forecast and it "appears sensible", he said. The difference between analysts' expectations of around £8m at the time the original offer was made in November and the current forecast related to an apparent reversal of the fall in order books revealed at the interim stage and the decision to cut refurbishment costs in the second half.

But he bit out at claims by Andrew Cook, the William Cook chairman, that the new bid still "massively undervalues" the company. "From buying in shares and saying there is no future for the company, now we are seeing sunshine in the air and daffodils in the garden... it is time shareholders got some fair treatment from Mr Cook."

The Cook chairman said the new offer "may no longer be ludicrously low, but it remains manifestly low." He claimed it was worth 10.5 times forecast earnings, a 31 per cent discount to the market, or 8.7 times if £2.2m of refurbishment costs were added back to the £11m forecast.

One of William Cook's big institutional shareholders last night lent support to that argument, saying:

"Superficially [the new bid] doesn't look all that impressive. There will be a lot of shouting to come, but it's not obviously a knock-out."

Cheer at Surrey Free Inns as profits leap

Tom Stevenson

Surrey Free Inns justified its sparkling performance on the Alternative Investment Market since the middle of 1995 with a 72 per cent jump in pre-tax profits in the half-year to November. The creator of the Litten Tree chain of pubs slipped 7.5p to 422.5p on profit-taking yesterday but the shares have still risen more than six-fold in 18 months from a low of 70p.

Rony Hill, managing director,

said: "We have had an excellent start to the year, demand at all our new sites is meeting expectations and our development programme is on track."

Pre-tax profits of £1.04m compared with £600,000 in the comparable period in 1995, struck from a 19 per cent increase in sales to £6.9m. Earnings per share increased by 45 per cent to 8.7p and the interim dividend rose 25 per cent to 1.25p.

Mr Hill said Surrey Free Inns, which started life 10 years ago as a property-based BES

scheme investment, was piloting a branded café concept to be called Bar Med to run alongside the Litten Tree pubs. He said running out a second brand would allow the company to double its exposure in fashionable areas such as Chelsea and Fulham, where the market could not sustain two of its large-scale pubs.

A move up from AIM to the main market is planned for this year to distance the company from a market which has underperformed the main market in recent months.

Mr Hill said tax relief enjoyed by some Surrey shareholders would not be affected by the move.

The Litten Tree pubs, described as a cross between JD Wetherspoon and Yates Wine Lodges, have succeeded in generating high returns on capital employed by segregating its aircraft hangar-sized outlets into different areas to cater for drinking, eating, watching television and business meetings at different times of the day.

Throughout the day the atmosphere and lighting are

changed so that a room used for drinking coffee in the morning might become a dancing venue for a younger crowd in the evening. By constantly shifting activities in the pub, Surrey aims to maximise the number of customers passing through a fairly fixed-cost base.

According to Mr Hill, trading continues strong at both outlets and the new sites opened over the past year.

He said Surrey was well on the way to achieving its target of at least eight new developments during 1997.

Triplex ups the ante with £72.6m Cook bid

Magnus Grimond

Triplex Lloyd yesterday sharply upped the ante in its bitter battle for rival Midlands castings group William Cook by raising its bid by more than 25 per cent to £72.6m and declaring its offer final.

The higher offer was immediately rejected by Cook and drew a mixed reaction from the stock market, with one big shareholder saying it was "not obviously a knock-out".

Triplex shares dropped 11p to 192.5p, while William Cook's gained 5p to 380p. At that level, Cook's shares still remain 5p below the new bid terms of 21 new shares plus £37.40 in cash for every 20 in Cook. There is a cash alternative of 383.4p a share.

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the original profit forecast of £10.7m for the current year to March, increased over the weekend to £11m. The group has also raised its forecast savings from £1.5m to £2.5m.

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But he bit out at claims by Andrew Cook, the William Cook chairman, that the new bid still "massively undervalues" the company. "From buying in shares and saying there is no future for the company, now we are seeing sunshine in the air and daffodils in the garden... it is time shareholders got some fair treatment from Mr Cook."

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'Manifestly low': Andrew Cook wants a better offer

Britannia closes its doors on carpetbaggers

John Willcock and Nic Cicutti

Britannia Building Society yesterday forced to close its doors to speculators after being hit by a tenfold increase of new account openings from carpetbaggers hoping to get free shares if it converts to a bank.

The society said it had decided to close temporarily its instant access account, which requires a minimum balance of £500, to new customers after more than 7,000 people clamoured to become members. Other accounts with a higher

opening deposit are still open. A spokesman added that Britannia had been forced to act after queues began to form at all of its branches in the wake of reports suggesting that its demutualisation was imminent.

John Heaps, Britannia chief executive, said: "This is not on the agenda and there are no fast tracks to be made from Britannia. We have said repeatedly, Britannia will not convert and there is no windfall in prospect."

The oev windfall frenzy to grip the Britannia came amid signs that the Building Societies Bill, long touted as offering

protection to mutuals from the unwelcome attention of converting societies, including Halifax, Woolwich, Northern Rock and the Alliance & Leicester, may not make it on to the statute book after all.

Angela Knight, Treasury Minister, is hoping to find parliamentary time for the Bill, which removes a five-year protection from takeover against former societies which themselves move against other financial targets.

A Treasury spokeswoman said it was still hoped the Bill could make its way through the Commons.

However, it is believed that unless time is given to the Bill in the next few weeks, the increasing likelihood of an early general election may lead to it being lost.

Despite the likely failure of the Building Societies Bill to succeed, evidence mounted of the continuing resilience of societies. Figures from the Building Societies' Association showed its members lent £13bn last year, 48 per cent more than in 1995.

By contrast, lending by members of the British Bankers' Association was up just 5 per cent on 1995 despite the addition for the first time of National &

Provincial, taken over by Abbey National, and the first full year of lending within the banking sector by Cheltenham & Gloucester.

Rob Thomas, analyst at UBS, the Swiss banking group, said: "The building societies have succeeded in pushing their share of lending up from 60 to 70 per cent in the past year... those loyal to mutualism have been the most competitive."

Mr Thomas pointed to the mounting competition between banks and mutuals for the decision yesterday by Abbey National to raise its savings rates by up to 0.6 per cent on some accounts.

Gulf turns up heat in Clyde battle

Tom Stevenson

The war of words between Gulf Canada and its British target Clyde Petroleum intensified yesterday as Gulf launched a scathing attack on Clyde's two recent defence documents.

Warning that it had never before increased an offer in a bid situation, Gulf unsettled the market in Clyde shares which from the outset of the hostile takeover attempt have traded above the value of the 105p, £432m offer.

Clyde's shares closed yesterday 2.5p lower at 120.5p after Gulf chief executive JP Bryan said the defence "represented a desperate attempt to obscure reality with irrelevant facts and spurious valuation methodologies".

At that level, the shares are still ahead of the cash offer price, but well below the 160p fair value the target's latest defence circular suggested for its shares.

Roy Franklin, chief executive of Clyde, responded in kind. "This is predictable rhetoric. Gulf's imaginative use of numbers and timings is a complete irrelevance. Nothing in this document undermines our case. The success of our strategy is self-evident."

Gulf's latest attack focused on the long-term track record of Clyde. During the six years prior to its offer, Gulf said, Clyde's market value had diminished by £149m, its share price had fallen by 45 per cent in the same period and it had failed to pay a dividend in four out of the last 10 years.

Clyde responded that it had been a recovery year since 1993 and questioned the validity of drawing attention to its performance before that time, which coincided with the appointment of Roy Franklin as chief executive.

Gulf also ridiculed Clyde's attempt to focus on a multiple of cash flow as the most appropriate valuation method for an oil company rather than net asset value.

Clyde has until next Tuesday to complete its defence and Gulf another week to finalise its offer.

Company Results				
	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Barbour Industries (I)	7.25m (6.80m)	1.90m (1.57m)	7.5p (6.2p)	3.15p (2.0p)
Debenhams Retail (F)	26.6m (18.5m)	2.27m (1.25m)	11.7p (6.5p)	- (-)
Flintshire King (I)	2.13m (2.31m)	72,000 (49,000)	0.5p (0.3p)	0.5p (0.5p)
Shandwick (F)	181m (167.8m)	9.2m (2.5m)	5.5p (1.7p)	1.40p (1.3p)
Somerfield (I)	1.71m (1.58m)	54.8m (43m)	15p (10.2p)	3.4p (-)
Surrey Free Inns (I)	6.89m (5.79m)	1.04m (0.8m)	8.7p (6p)	1.25p (1p)
(F) - First (I) - Interim (I) - Nine months				

sport

NEW FACES FOR '97: While her horses romp to success a young trainer is running up an enviable strike-rate. Greg Wood reports

Williams on a roll with happy horses

Venetia Williams has an exercise book in which she details the performance of every horse she runs, with winners entered in red felt-tip and the losers in black biro. Not far away on her desktop is a shopping list, and one of the items on it says a great deal about her first full season as a trainer: new red pen.

Indeed, it is a little surprising that the old one has lasted so long, since for several months, winners have been emerging from Williams's yard as dependably as cars off a production line. To date this season she has saddled 19 winners from 48 runners, giving a strike-rate of 40 per cent which even the likes of Martin Pipe (27 per cent) and Kim Bailey (22 per cent) can only dream about. Ignore the summer jumping campaign, meanwhile, and the total since early September is 19 winners and 22 losers (13 of which made the frame).

After barely a year with a licence, there is a head peering over the door of every one of Williams's 40 boxes. For most trainers at a similar stage, their careers are the highest problem is finding half a dozen horses which run faster than they walk, rather than how to make room for the latest recruits. While potential new owners may now ring at any mo-

ment, however, the early days were more difficult.

"You can't just twiddle the sign in the window to 'open' because nothing will happen," Williams says. "I spent a lot of time going all over the country. I chased a lot of red herrings, but I also came up with quite a few people who were new to racing." The first weeks and months brought a frustrating series of near-misses, and Williams was forced to rely on a useful piece of advice. "Someone told me that you must use statistics for your own benefit, and I noticed that of the top 100 yards, we had the second-best placed percentage." This season, of course, the stats speak for themselves.

Delighted though she is by her present success, there is nothing false about the modesty with which Williams discusses her rapid ascent, nor about the definite hint of surprise that she has come so far, so swiftly. After all, who she secured her first job in racing, as secretary to Grant Fritchard-Gordon in Newmarket, it was riding, not training, which was her private passion. But that was until, in the spring of 1987, holding the binoculars suddenly seemed far more attractive than holding the reins.

"I'd ridden in the Grand National two weeks before and fallen at Becher's," she says, "the

last time that men were men and Becher's was Becher's. They modified it after I'd put a hole in the landing side. I was knocked unconscious but otherwise I was fine. A fortnight later I was in a common-or-garden hurdle at Worcester, on a 33-1 chance, in front coming to the last. And bang. I broke my neck, and I don't recommend it. I was temporarily paralysed, which was a bit worrying, and even though everything was okay in the end, that was the end of the riding."

The fundamentals of training were learned as an assistant to John Edwards, a near-neighbour, and Nigel Twiston-Davies, until the time seemed right to renovate and extend a stable block on land which has been in her family for centuries. Now Williams had the chance to add a personal touch to the routine, and while she denies that there is any secret technique behind her glut of winners, it is difficult to argue with the form book.

"We try to take a common-sense approach to everything," she says, "and it seems sensible to go with a horse's nature rather than trying to get them to fit my idea of it. For instance, if a horse is in his box for 23 hours in a day and then on the 24th, you go up the gallops and back down again, his circulation

goes from total stagnation to suddenly roaring around its body, and then cuts out completely again for another 23 hours. Then you wonder why you get joints filling up and so on.

"So we try to turn most of ours out in the paddocks every afternoon, and they can have three or four hours just quietly walking around. The first

thing they all do is get down and have a roll, then they get their heads down and eat some grass, gently keeping the circulation going. That's a natural, too, for horses to have their heads down for a few hours a day, and for that reason all my horses have their mangers at ground level."

Perhaps it is just the memory of how glorious it once was to be a muddy child, but as the

horses are led back to their boxes after an afternoon of romping and rolling—"probably the filthiest horses in training," Williams says—they seem to be glowing visions of health and contentment.

"I don't know that I'm doing much right, maybe I'm just not doing much wrong," she says. "I try not to look too far ahead. There are heaps of horses which

have won a bumper in Ireland which are all going to be Gold Cup winners, until they're proved otherwise. It's exactly the same with trainers. People think, second-season trainer, one or two winners, hey chaps, we've spotted one here. Then the horses get stuffed two or three times and suddenly I'll be yesterday's news."

When you have lain paral-

ysed on the downside of the last flight at Worcester, such caution over long-term predictions is understandable. If Williams herself is unsure how long her winning streak will last, however, her horses offer compelling evidence. The filthiest in training they may be, but few who saw them would deny that they are probably the happiest too.

Well turned out: Williams has made a smart start to her training career while her horses keep their heads down

Photograph: Robert Hallam

LINGFIELD

1.10 Quin Encounter
2.10 Rose Of Glen
2.40 Amber Spark

GOING: Good (Good to soft in places).

Left-hand, undulating course with stiff fences.
Course is south-west of town on B3209, Lingfield station (served by London Victoria) 10 miles south. A.D.M. (one enclosure) 5.5. C.A.R. PARK: Club 5.5. remainder free.

SIS RACING CHANNEL

LEADING TRAINERS WITH RUNNERS: M. Pipe - 11 winners from 44 runners gives a success rate of 25.0% and a loss to a level stake of 47.85; A. Turner - 9 winners, 29 runners, 31.2%, 43.44; T. Thorne - 8 winners, 31 runners, 25.8%, 40.04; N. Twiston-Davies - 7 winners, 24 runners, 29.2%, 40.04; T. Thorne - 6 winners, 24 runners, 25.0%, 40.04; T. Thorne - 5 winners, 24 runners, 20.8%, 40.04; T. Thorne - 4 winners, 24 runners, 16.7%, 40.04; T. Thorne - 3 winners, 24 runners, 12.5%, 40.04; T. Thorne - 2 winners, 24 runners, 8.3%, 40.04; T. Thorne - 1 winner, 24 runners, 4.2%, 40.04.

LEADING JOCKEYS: D. Budge - 12 wins, 40 rides, 30.0%; A. Dwyer - 11 wins, 42 rides, 28.6%; J. G. Moore - 10 wins, 40 rides, 25.0%; J. G. Moore - 9 wins, 40 rides, 22.5%; J. G. Moore - 8 wins, 40 rides, 20.0%; J. G. Moore - 7 wins, 40 rides, 17.5%; J. G. Moore - 6 wins, 40 rides, 15.0%; J. G. Moore - 5 wins, 40 rides, 12.5%; J. G. Moore - 4 wins, 40 rides, 10.0%; J. G. Moore - 3 wins, 40 rides, 7.5%; J. G. Moore - 2 wins, 40 rides, 5.0%; J. G. Moore - 1 win, 40 rides, 2.5%.

BUNKEBERG FIRST TIME: Super Gold (1.10), Parliamentarian & Sophie May (2.40), Haverham (3.10). WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: None.

LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Rose Of Glen (2.10) has been sent 177 miles by B. Pelling, from Yarnmouth, South Devon.

1.10 PORTCULLIS AMATEUR RIDERS NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £2,925 added 2m 7f Penalty Value £2,688

1. 20-40 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

2. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

3. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

4. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

5. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

6. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

7. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

8. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

9. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

10. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

11. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

12. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

13. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

14. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

15. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

16. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

17. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

18. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

19. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

20. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

21. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

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24. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

25. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

26. 10-10 BAYBRO (M) (J. G. Moore) 12.5. J. G. Moore (7) B

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HYPERION

3.10 Theme Arena
3.40 OATS N BARLEY (nap)
4.10 Bigsound

GOING: Good (Good to soft in places).

Left-hand, undulating course with stiff fences.
Course is south-west of town on B3209, Lingfield station (served by London Victoria) 10 miles south. A.D.M. (one enclosure) 5.5. C.A.R. PARK: Club 5.5. remainder free.

SIS RACING CHANNEL

LEADING TRAINERS WITH RUNNERS: M. Pipe - 11 winners from 44 runners gives a success rate of 25.0% and a loss to a level stake of 47.85; A. Turner - 9 winners, 29 runners, 31.2%, 43.44; T. Thorne - 8 winners, 31 runners, 25.8%, 40.04; N. Twiston-Davies - 7 winners, 24 runners, 29.2%, 40.04; T. Thorne - 6 winners, 24 runners, 25.0%, 40.04; T. Thorne - 5 winners, 24 runners, 20.8%, 40.04; T. Thorne - 4 winners, 24 runners, 16.7%, 40.04; T. Thorne - 3 winners, 24 runners, 12.5%, 40.04; T. Thorne - 2 winners, 24 runners, 8.3%, 40.04; T. Thorne - 1 winner, 24 runners, 4.2%, 40.04.

LEADING JOCKEYS: D. Budge - 12 wins, 40 rides, 30.0%; A. Dwyer - 11 wins, 42 rides, 28.6%; J. G. Moore - 10 wins, 40 rides, 25.0%; J. G. Moore - 9 wins, 40 rides, 22.5%; J. G. Moore - 8 wins, 40 rides, 20.0%; J. G. Moore - 7 wins, 40 rides, 17.5%; J. G. Moore - 6 wins, 40 rides, 15.0%; J. G. Moore - 5 wins, 40 rides, 12.5%; J. G. Moore - 4 wins, 40 rides, 10.0%; J. G. Moore - 3 wins, 40 rides, 7.5%; J. G. Moore - 2 wins, 40 rides, 5.0%; J. G. Moore - 1 win, 40 rides, 2.5%.

BUNKEBERG FIRST TIME: Super Gold (1.10), Parliamentarian & Sophie May (2.40), Haverham (3.10). WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: None.

LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Rose Of Glen (2.10) has been sent 177 miles by B. Pelling, from Yarnmouth, South Devon.

1.10 PORTCULLIS AMATEUR RIDERS NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £2,925 added 2m 7f Penalty Value £2,688

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e. Greg Wood reports



Closed roof opens new arguments

Tennis

DERRICK WHYTE
reports from Melbourne

The Australian Open quarter-finals came in out of the heat yesterday but not everybody was happy about it. For the first time ever, the Centre Court roof was closed to protect players and spectators from heat exceeding 40°C in the shade and more than 60°C in court.

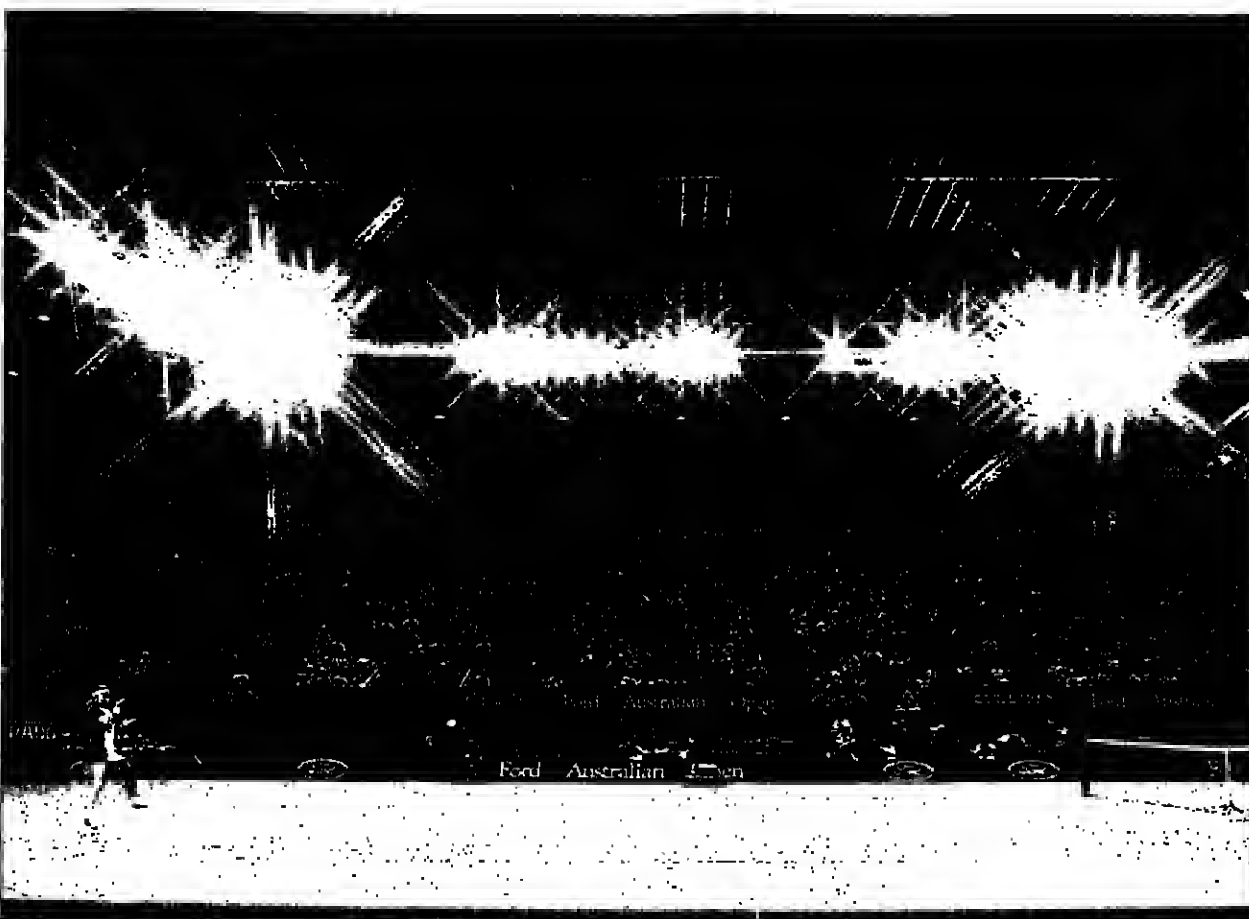
Although players wilted and complained in similar conditions the previous two days, the tournament referee, Peter Benger, did not have the option of closing the roof because it would not have been fair to all the competitors: some would have played in the heat and some avoided it.

Before the quarter-finals, which yesterday saw Carlos Moya, Michael Chang, Mary Pierce and Amanda Coetzer all win, some singles matches are played on outer courts with no roof. But starting with yesterday's games, all singles matches are on the 15,000-seat Centre Court and the roof can be closed at Benger's discretion if temperatures reach 35°C.

Still, some players wanted the roof open so their fitness or playing style, better suited to wind and sun, might give them an edge. "I was going to play anyway so even if it's snowing, raining or 60 degrees I don't care," the unseeded Moya said after beating his fellow Spaniard Felix Mantilla in four sets.

"I think it may have been a different match in the sun and wind," a furious Mantilla said. Benger said: "We haven't had 40-degree temperatures in Melbourne for eight years. I thought it was better for the game, for the players and for the public, to be able to view the game in relative comfort. I think in all this, the public deserves some consideration."

Moya had to put friendship aside as he disposed of the 14th-seeded Mantilla 7-5, 6-2, 6-7, 6-2. Once considered just another Spanish clay-court baseliner, Moya has grown in confidence since beating the defending champion, Boris Becker, in the first round. Yesterday he regularly came to the net. It was Spain's best performance at the Australian Open since Andres Gimeno lost the 1969 final in Rod Laver.



Roofed-in: Centre Court was closed because of the heat for the first time at the Australian Open yesterday. Photograph: Reuters

Moya now meets Chang, the world No 2, who reached the semi-finals for the third successive year. Chang, who has not won a Grand Slam event since the French Open eight years ago, ruthlessly disposed of the ninth-seeded Chilean Marcelo Rios 7-5, 6-1, 6-4 in just under two hours.

Chang has dropped only one set in his past five matches at Melbourne Park. He was a beaten finalist here last year and has also been runner-up at the French and US Open in the past two years. He said he did not feel under any pressure. "I'm not too concerned about whether or not I'm able to win another Grand Slam title and stuff like that," he said. "I like to think things are getting better and better... I still feel like my best tennis is ahead of me."

In the first women's quarter-final, South Africa's Amanda Coetzer showed the same form which helped her bring down top seed Steffi Graf as she beat Kimberly Po of the United States 6-4, 6-1. Although Po managed to break Coetzer's serve once in each set, the South African converted six out of six break points. Coetzer also criticised the decision to shut the roof, although she conceded it had given her and Po a break from the heat. "I definitely would have preferred playing outside. I love playing out in the sun," she said.

Pierce, in her quarter-final against Sabine Appelmans of Belgium, lost the first set 6-1 before levelling in the second and then came back from 3-0 down in the third to win 1-6, 6-4, 6-4. "That's the great thing about tennis, you never know what's going to happen," she said, looking forward to a tough semi-final with Coetzer.

Second-seeded Britons David Sherwood and James Trotman defeated Croat Ivan Ljubicic and Italian Federico Luzzic 6-3, 6-4 in the second round of the boys doubles.

Tyrrell spurred on by old boy network of F1

Derick Allsop meets a man relishing the start of the grand prix season

Formula One is an ever-shifting landscape, but some things never change and, as regular as Old Father Time, and despite recent indifferent performances, Ken Tyrrell duly appeared for his annual launch.

This time, however, there was cause for renewed optimism and purpose. The season beckoning is Tyrrell's 30th, and he faces a reinforced challenge as he confronts the prospect of a midfield contest with Jackie Stewart, his most distinguished old boy.

Stewart's much-trumpeted arrival as a team chief appears to have sharpened Tyrrell's appetite. Stewart has secured a factory deal with Ford for V10 engines while Tyrrell, having parted company with Yamaha, has Ford V8 units, but defeat at the hands of the man who won three world titles in his car is a scenario he dreads not contemplate.

Tyrrell, who unveiled his latest car in London's Leicester Square on Monday night, said: "I told Paul, Jackie's son, to tell his dad we're going to blow him into the weeds. Paul said I should tell him myself, but I told him I didn't think Jackie could stand the shock."

Good-natured wind-up it may have been, but Tyrrell will be anxious to avoid acute embarrassment when the F1 tour opens with the Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne on 9 March.

"I'm not thinking about being embarrassed because I don't expect to be beaten by Jackie," Tyrrell said. "He's going to find it difficult, as I'm sure he knows. It's going to be hard to make the jump to running a team in Formula One."

"When we started you could buy a car from someone, which is what we did for the first couple of years. Now it's much more complex, building your own car and setting up the whole organisation. But Jackie is a determined person, and I'm sure he'll make it in the end. It's just that it will take time and people must understand that."

It is taking Tyrrell rather more time than he would have liked to rejoin F1's heavyweights. Stewart's championship successes were back in 1969, 1971 and 1973. The team last won a grand prix in 1983. This season, Tyrrell predicts, he will have a more competitive car-engine package, and believes the signing of the Dutchman Jos Verstappen, in place of Ukyo Katayama, to partner Finland's much-vaunted Mika Salo, gives him one of his strongest driver pairings for years.

"It is my job to get the right package for the team, so recently I've not been doing a job right," Tyrrell said. "We had an appalling season in 1996 - only five points, eighth in the constructors' championship - really bad."

"Ford and Cosworth should give us the reliability we require and Jos is a young driver I have been very impressed with. It was difficult for him when he was first thrown in by Benetton alongside Michael Schumacher - it was an almost impossible situation. But last year with Footwork he looked very good and I'm delighted to get him."

"I'm equally delighted Mika is still with us. People have been trying to take him away from us and I can understand why. He has a lot of talent. I'm sure they'll push one another and that will take the team forward. It's what we need."

You might imagine the last thing Tyrrell needed was a 30th season in the manic world of F1, but he laughs off any suggestions of retirement. "It is still the same for me as it was in 1968," he said. "I have the same enthusiasm, the same nervousness at the start and waiting for our cars to come round at the end of the first lap. I love it."

"This season we want to have a number of podium finishers and show we are capable of running with the top teams. We have to get it right. We should know if we have on 9 March."

Merricks and Walker prove to be an adaptable double act

Sailing

STUART ALEXANDER
reports from Key West, Florida

Richard Matthews, the British Admiral's Cup team captain, was a happy man at the Key West Race Week yesterday after watching two of his three charges acquire themselves well in the first race.

Matthews was especially

pleased with the performance of the Olympic 470 silver medalists, John Merricks and Ian Walker. The pair have already shown they can make the transition to bigger boats by winning second in the UK Melges 24 Championships and in the Gold Cup in Barcelona.

By moving up from 14ft boats, through 24ft and up to Mumm 36 they are showing an adaptability which could take them all the way to an America's Cup. They underlined this yesterday when posting a third in a class fleet in their first Mumm 36 start on Tim Barratt's Bradamante. And on the middle boat, Tony Buckingham's 40-foot Easy Oars, Andy Beadsworth, just pipped for an Olympic medal in the Soling last year, steered another young crew to second place in its class.

Only the big boat, Graham Walker's Corsi 45 Indulgence, struggled. Matthews, however, was quick to point out that the purpose of this regatta, which has attracted a record 262 entries, is not a matter of individual race results, but the start of a serious six-month drive to ensure top billing in an Admiral's Cup that will be far from easy to win.

And aiming to make it tougher will be the man who must stand out as the top sailor in the world, the New Zealander Russell Coutts. The America's Cup winner swept all before him last year to re-establish himself at the top of the world match race rankings. Yesterday, he was back in the top slot of class one, racing Canadian John Risley's new 46-foot John, Numbers.

In the Melges 24 class the European flag is being carried by the Italian Giorgio Zucchi, the winner of the Glenfiddich European circuit last year, who is sailing one of the new hulls developed by Rob White in Britain.

The home-grown opposition is strong, with Dave Chapin surprising no one by winning the first race, beating Dave Ullman into second place as Zucchi hung on to finish fourth in the light conditions.

INDEPENDENT FANTASY FOOTBALL
LATEST RESULTS AND TOP 50 TEAMS

TOP FIFTY LEAGUE TABLE			
CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 17 AUGUST - 12 JANUARY			
POS	NAME	TEAM	POINTS
1	MR PETER FRANKENTAL	FOR MARTI	649
2	MR SIMON DRAPER	PLATE EG	627
3	MR P FRANKENTAL	ARLENSIU	624
4	MR WILLIAM BARR	KRIEGER F C	620
5	MR G HURFITT	CLEAN SHEETS F C	616
6	MR NICK NIGHT	KNIGHT'S NANA HEAD	614
7	MR PAUL MATTHEW	THE DOOR MAT	612
8	MR R PRINGLE	DEEPOALE VILLA 7	610
9	MR C NOBEL	T O F T	610
10	MR RICK YAP	OUT OF MIND	609
11	MR J NATHAN MCCROSSEN	WASH TOP ARMY	608
12	MR BILL COOPER	YEP MOP 2000	606
13	MR ANDREW BURMAN	WIMBLEDON STUPID HEADS	606
14	MR K B MALCOLM	INTER MALCOLM	607
15	MR DARREN GREEN	FOR THE AZURE	606
16	MR D R KENNEDY	HAMMERS UNITED	605
17	MR RAYMOND CHICKEN	ALIVE MEN FROM UNCLE 2	604
18	MR STEVEN HART	KEE'S COWBOYS	603
19	MR M THOMAS	RAGGY BOYS IN STRIPES	603
20	MR J E GOODING	TEAM SQUIDUPS	603
21	MR LAN ZEIDER	THE FOOTBALL BANDITS	602
22	MR DAVID ASHTON	THE LODGERS	602
23	MR SCOTT LYNEFF	HOO HA SERENADERS	602
24	MR S LAWRENCE	TESSA'S LITTLE MARVELS	601
25	MR JOHN WANEING	4000 HOLES	601
26	MR ADAM HOGG	BLAGGY HOGG	601

THE INDEPENDENT
Today we publish the latest results in our Independent Fantasy Football game, supported by Philips Energy Saver Light Bulbs.

The Team Market and Scores table published below, shows four scores. The Week 23 (Wk 23) column lists all points scored in matches played between Monday 13 January - Sunday 19 January inclusive. Column B lists all points scored before the transfer period. Column A lists all points scored after the transfer period. The Overall (Ov) column lists the total amount of points scored in all matches played from Saturday 17 August - Sunday 19 January. Also published today is the Top 50 League table (see left). It lists the overall top scoring Independent Fantasy Football managers and their teams for matches played between Saturday 17 August - Sunday 12 January.

Results will be published every Wednesday in The Independent for all games played from the previous Monday to Sunday inclusive. They will also appear the following Sunday, in the Independent on Sunday.

SCORING SYSTEM
4 points for a goal ■ 4 points for a goalkeeper/defender clean sheet ■ 3 points for a successful assist ■ 1 point when a player is selected and plays ■ 1 point for a winning goal ■ 3 points for a manager win, 1 point for a draw ■ Lose 1 point for a yellow card ■ Lose 3 points for a red card

TEAM MARKET AND SCORES

Overall score calculated on matches played from 17 August - 19 January; Week 23 score calculated on matches played from 6 January - 19 January

CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	WEEKS	POINTS	VALUE	CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	WEEKS	POINTS	VALUE	CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	WEEKS	POINTS	VALUE																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																							
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sport

Tour tees off in America's shadow

Golf

ANDY FARRELL
reports from Gold Coast,
Queensland

If the expectation is that the Americans, led by a rampant Tiger Woods, will turn them over in the Ryder Cup come September, it may not be entirely unsuitable for Europe's golfers to be beginning their season Down Under. At least they will set off with hope, or anyway at Hope Island, where the Johnnie Walker Classic tees off tomorrow.

The emergence of not just the phenomenon that is Woods, but others such as Phil Mickelson, Steve Stricker, Justin Leonard and David Duval, has certainly helped to make the US Tour a happening place. Greg Norman, the Nicks, Faldo and Price, Ernie Els, Vijay Singh and now New Zealand's Frank Nobilo have given the Tour an international feel by choosing to play the majority of their golf there.

But that hardly makes the Ryder Cup - a match between two teams of 12 players over three

days and still some eight months away - a foregone conclusion.

Since the Great Britain and Ireland team gave way to Europe in 1979, the biennial match has not been about which team is the stronger on either side of the Atlantic. The Americans found this out the hard way when they lost in '85 and '87; the Europeans could not take advantage of a stagnating US Tour in '91 and '93.

"It is one thing to look at names on paper," said Bernhard Langer, "it's another to be out on the golf course. They said that the Americans were stronger on paper last time, and that we were the underdogs, but we won."

If it is asking too much for Seve Ballesteros to concentrate on his Ryder Cup captaincy duties and regain the highest form, or for Jose-Maria Olazabal's rheumatoid arthritis to go into remission enough for him to resume playing, Langer is free of the injuries that led to his loss of form last year.

The broomhandle putter with which he swept to victory in Hong Kong to close his sea-

son will remain in the bag, which turned up yesterday after being lost for 24 hours in transit from Los Angeles. Currently 36th on the Cup points list, Langer, who has played on eight European teams, knows that gaining selection again is not something to be taken for granted. "No, definitely not," he said.

"It is getting harder to make the team every two years. There are now more younger, stronger players. The depth and strength of the European Tour is constantly improving. Ten to 15 years ago, we had four, six, eight really good players but the bottom of the list was weak. Now it is hard to get in the team."

Only Faldo can rely on one of the two wild card picks, as he has done on three of the last four occasions, when Ballesteros makes his selections on 1 September. He has arrived here after a week's fishing in New Zealand with Greg Turner, but will not play on the European Tour again until after the US Open. Then it is likely to be the Irish Open and the Loch Lomond World Invitational in July leading up to the Open at Royal Troon. A major championship win is the only way of satisfying his captain's request for the Englishman to qualify automatically.

If there is a reliance on the familiar names it is because only three of the 11 Europeans who have made their Cup debuts in the Nineties have played more than once. It is time for players like Paul Broadhurst and Peter Baker to put in a repeat performance to go alongside possible newcomers such as Darren Clarke and Lee Westwood.

Similarly, the Tour has had 21 first-time winners in the last two years, some of whom may show that they can become multiple winners. The turnover of winners has also been high recently. Collingtree Park has suffered the inevitable consequence for its greens: a fiasco last summer and the One Two British Masters, the send-off event before the Ryder Cup at Valderrama, moves to the Forest of Arden.

The Midlands venue used to



Nick Faldo practises his iron play at Hope Island yesterday

Photograph: Allsport

be home to the Alamo English Open which now switches to Hanbury Manor in Hertfordshire. The list of sites has taken time to emerge as they have been regularly reappraised. There should be no complaints that there are no complaints to make when concerned with professional golfers about Hope Island, where Faldo and Langer will be joined by Colin Montgomerie, Ian Woosnam, Els, Singh and John Daly.

Mined out of Queensland's Gold Coast, it was designed by

Peter Thomson. "You can see it's been designed by an expert," Montgomerie said. "It was not a question of the Tour getting back on track after last year, but there were a couple of hiccups. The Tour has admitted there were mistakes and we don't want any more. We must look for positives and one of them is coming down here to play quality courses like this week and next week in Perth."

Montgomerie, complete with a specially designed shaft in his

Great Big Bertha driver that he picked up at the Callaway factory after winning the Million Dollar in December, remains the man to beat on the money list. Montgomerie will play eight or nine times in America, but has still scheduled 18 events in an attempt to win a fifth Order of Merit title.

"As for being the best player not to have won a major yet," Montgomerie said, "it's better than being the second best." It is still a tag the Scot will be hell-bent on losing this year.

BAF has to work for its Lottery cash

Athletics

MIKE ROWBOTTOM

British athletics, which will submit a bid this week for an annual lottery grant of £5.5m, may be forced to put its house in order before becoming eligible for the new funding.

When Peter Radford resigned as the British Athletic Federation's executive chairman on Saturday, he cited the constraints imposed upon the sport's professional administrators by its unwieldy committee system and the divergent aims of a Council nearly 60 strong.

Radford became the fourth chief executive to have departed within the last 15 years, causing many in the sport to regard the job as a poisoned chalice. But Lottery Fund officials administering the newly instituted World Class Performance programme - which will provide more than £40m of extra funding for sporting bodies and competitors in its first year - are insisting that applying sports should streamline their management structures. And there have been strong hints in Sports Council circles that British athletics, among other sports, has urgent work to do.

"If we are committing ourselves to giving out significant sums of public money, we have got the absolute right to ask for reassurance that the management structure of a sport is fit for the purpose," said Roy Healey, of the Lottery Unit.

"We have to be sure the decision-making process is fast enough and informed enough. If we discover a large council or committee which is unwieldy, and contains people who are not best placed to make decisions which move a sport in the right direction, we would be within our rights to say we would only invest on an interim basis until weaknesses in the structure were sorted out."

All sports receiving grants will undergo a rigorous examination by independent auditors before

lottery money is transferred, and there will be regular checks once the funding is established. If a team succumbed from the National Audit Office encounters a problem, then grants will be made provisional for a year. Failure to deal with the problem could see funding cut off completely.

The BAF is holding an emergency meeting this week in the wake of Radford's resignation. The names of several possible successors have been floated, including Sebastian Coe, David Moorcroft, Mike Whittingham and Brendan Foster. The latter characterised British athletics' top job this week as one he would not wish on his worst enemy. Perhaps the financial leverage the Sports Council can bring to bear at this critical point in British sports funding will alter that position.

Makolm Arnold, the BAF chief coach who is masterminding a bid which has been well received in draft form, remained confident yesterday that Radford's imminent departure would not deter the UK Sports Council from acceptance.

He is seeking £4m this year to transform Britain's coaching programme and approximately £1.5m of subsistence funding on behalf of 310 competitors from across the athletic disciplines.

If Arnold's hopes are fulfilled, the sport will be able to establish a support system to match that in place in many other countries throughout Europe. Arnold foresees a new structure which would boost the number of full time coaches from 10 to 35.

So far, three sports - swimming, netball and rowing - have submitted their detailed bids to the UK Sports Council, which hopes to make the first of its subsistence grants to competitors in March. All grants will be means tested, with money being deducted off basic grants when the competitors' income surpasses £28,000 per annum. However, prize money up to £25,000 will not be part of that calculation and any money from sponsorship will only be assessed at 50 per cent.

Taylor in the firing line

The national team have lost their last five matches, the captain is under increasing pressure to justify his position, the selectors are criticised for their inconsistency, the new coach is on the defensive and the very structure of domestic cricket is being reviewed.

The scenario is strikingly familiar but the captain in question is Mark Taylor, rather than Mike Atherton, the coach Geoff Marsh not David Lloyd, the first-class competition the Sheffield Shield and the team the supposedly mighty, confident Australia.

If Englishmen have become accustomed and as adept at discussing the state of their cricket team as their equally erratic weather, Australians have taken the consistency of both for granted. When one deviates from the norm it is the signal for soul-searching from press and public.

A month ago, after the West Indies had been convincingly beaten in the first two Tests and World Series one day internationals, the fear was that a series marketed as "The Decider", following Australia's 2-1 triumph in the Caribbean in 1995, had been embarrassingly transformed into what headline writers took to term "The One-Side".

That now has a hollow ring to it as the sides prepare for the fourth Test which starts in Adelaide on Saturday. The West Indies won the third Test in

Tony Cozier on the sudden state of crisis affecting Australian cricket

Melbourne in three days and, with Curtly Ambrose and Brian Lara returning to form they reeled off eight successive victories after losing seven straight.

Momentum has been lost again with three successive defeats, including the World Series final against Pakistan, but that should not count against them in Adelaide.

The Australians also succumbed to a youthful, enthusiastic Pakistan team in the World Series final, for the first time in 18 years, they failed to qualify for the final, a shattering blow to both board treasury and team morale.

Australia have now lost 11 of their last 14 one-day internationals. That would be an unacceptable ratio for England, and far less for an Australian public led to believe media hype that its team were world champions in everything but official title.

Taylor is a bold and imaginative captain but, as a left-handed opener, his form this season has been so shocking that he considered dropping out of the one-day series to return to the Sheffield Shield. Predictably, Taylor's men have

been hit by their leader. "He brings a lot of experience and calmness to the side," Steve Waugh, a veteran of 84 Tests, said. "He's got the respect of all the players."

Yet if Taylor continues to fail in the final two Tests against the West Indies and, more especially, if Australia lose both and, with them, the cherished Frank Worrell Trophy, his appointment for the tour of South Africa that follows and the Ashes series in England would be in jeopardy.

The absence of the top players on international duty diminishes the quality of the Sheffield Shield, the nursery for the Test team and, significantly, no young batsman has recently established himself in the team. The Victorian Cricket Association has prepared a paper recommending changes that would streamline the Shield by reducing the number of matches. But support has been minimal even though there is a growing feeling that change is needed.

The former captain Allan Border has called the future "wide of the mark". "Any of the 66 one-day players in the Shield could play a Test match or a one-day international and not disgrace themselves," he said. So far this season, Australia have used 19 and not all have measured up to Border's assessment. Australian cricket suddenly does not look as healthy as it did at the start of the season.

Campbell hits out at Lloyd again

The Zimbabwe captain, Alistair Campbell, took another verbal swipe at the England coach, David Lloyd, when his team arrived in Johannesburg yesterday for a triangular one-day series against South Africa and India.

Campbell, clearly still stung by Lloyd's comments that England had "murdered" Zimbabwe in last month's drawn second Test in Bulawayo, said: "I think we've improved a lot over the last 12 months. We had a tough apprenticeship in the subcontinent and that stood us in good stead against England."

"All this 'We murdered them and they know it' business is really ridiculous coming from a grown man. At the end of the day we drew the Test series and won the one-dayers 3-0."

"We've heard a lot about how badly they played and about how they've been called the worst side to leave England's shores but they just didn't want to give us credit for playing good cricket."

"We intend to go out and play positive cricket against India and South Africa. If we do that then there is no reason why we can't do very well again, and all the guys know that."

Zimbabwe play one warm-up match today under floodlights against North West in Fochville. Their first match in the tournament is against South Africa at Centurion Park on Saturday.

Meanwhile, in Auckland Dominic Cork reported no real change to his back complaint. But England's No 1 bowler will have no idea about how the injury is progressing until he is given a fitness test by the physiotherapist Wayne Morten.

who said Cork was feeling more comfortable and was continuing to have treatment on what is feared to be torn tissue.

England travelled from Hamilton to Auckland yesterday but otherwise had a day off following their two-and-a-half day trouncing of Northern Districts.

Cork will warm up with the England squad when they gather for net practice in Auckland this morning - and it will not be until then that he will know whether he has a chance of playing in Friday's first Test against New Zealand. The initial diagnosis of Cork's back pain was that it seemed serious, but he is refusing to be pessimistic.

"I'm feeling OK today, but at the moment all I can do is wait and see how I am at practice," Cork said.

McGeechan seeks free-thinkers

Rugby Union

CHRIS HEWITT

Tours of South Africa tend to be fiery affairs - a battle-scared players with bruised knuckles and split eyelids talk euphemistically about the "physical" nature of Springbok rugby - so it is entirely appropriate that this summer's Lions party for the third successive tour, believes the current South African side to be stronger than the 1995 World Cup-winning side. "I'm treating the programme as though we're playing six Five Nations matches, four Super-12 games and three World Cup finals," he said yesterday.

"I have some idea of the type of player I want to take and it could well be that we have to look outside the current Five Nations selections. There is a way to play South Africa and we need free-thinkers who will be

positive and not stay in their shells. We also need men with a hard mental edge because the pressure they will face will be greater than any other pressure they ever experience."

Even though Rob Wainwright, the Scottish captain and early favourite to skipper the Lions, was present at yesterday's sponsorship announcement at the South African High Commission in Trafalgar Square, Fran Cotton, the tour manager, was adamant his selection panel was not even close to making up its mind on the leadership issue. He did reveal an initial squad of 60 would be announced next month, from which most, if not all, the tourists would be drawn.

"We'll meet on 9 February to put some certainties down on paper," the former Lions prop said. "It's good to see Rob back

fit and playing for Scotland because he's one player with experience as an international captain. But our choice of leader may possibly be someone who is not captain of his country; the chief criteria are that he can guarantee his Test place and command the respect of the squad."

Cotton said the selectors would take "three or four" proven international goalkeepers to Johannesburg in May. Given that Neil Jenkins, the Welsh outside-half turned full-back, is one of the very British players who fall into that category, it will be a surprise if he is left back home in Pontypool. And he was in Trafalgar Square yesterday, too.

Rory Underwood has shaken off the challenge of teenage wing Leon Lloyd and secured a place in Leicester's European Cup final side against Brive on Saturday.

Wigan reject Sevens offer

Rugby League

CHRIS HEWITT

Wigan have turned down an invitation to defend their title at the Middlesex Sevens this year, writes Dave Huddfield.

The first rugby league club to compete in the tournament struck a propaganda blow for the code by beating all-comers last season, but they feel that their commitments are too heavy this time.

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Russian couple in control

Ice Skating

CHRIS HEWITT

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Russian and French competitors dominated the event, sharing the top five positions. Angelika Krylova and Oleg Ovsianikov, of Russia, were

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Thomas Cook

Around the resorts

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Comyn on trail of silver suedehead

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he said. "I've put up with mistreatment for a long time, but the reaction was not normal for me." The 31-year-old striker was later in a series of clashes between Tostack and the Riazor crowd since his arrival at the club last season. Fans were especially incensed by his decision to join Bebeito, and blamed Tostack for the striker's subsequent move back to Brazil.

For his part, Tostack blamed Lendoiro for buying wrong players and not spending enough on training facilities. Earlier this year he said he would expect to continue at the club when his contract expires in June, but he speculated he may return to Britain.

Supporters replied swiftly, dubbing the Riazor crowd anti-Tostack graffiti. Tostack has also come under fire from Rafael Martin Vazquez, T

		Total
107 (22.1%)	140 (28.9%)	
16 (4%)	109 (22.3%)	
113 (22.5%)	137 (27.5%)	
54 (10%)	95 (18.7%)	
51 (12.5%)	75 (14.8%)	
28 (3.8%)	53 (12.6%)	

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The Tour tees off
Faldo and Co look to strike gold
in Queensland, page 24

sport

FA Cup Countdown
The pit village defender chasing
an Italian shirt, page 25



Ravanelli says Boro move was mistake

Football

MARK PIERSON

Fabrizio Ravanelli has admitted for the first time he may have made a mistake in joining Middlesbrough, and his remarks to the Italian media are bound to anger the Premier-ship's hottest club.

Bryan Robson, the Boro manager, last week ordered the outspoken former Juventus player to stop making critical public comments about the club. But Ravanelli continued his tirade against Middlesbrough when he joined the Italian squad in Palermo, preparing for the match with Northern Ireland tonight.

Gianluca Vialli yesterday committed himself to Chelsea but his former team-mate in Turin is still at odds with his club. Ravanelli said: "The difference between me and Vialli was that he was heading towards the end of his contract at Juventus and had time to think about what he was doing. I only had a few days and my transfer to Middlesbrough arrived suddenly. Perhaps if I had seen certain things beforehand I would have chosen differently."

Ravanelli, who was sent off

at the weekend, also criticised Middlesbrough's lack of manpower when the squad was decimated over Christmas by illness and injury.

He said: "We had so few players we had to field our coach Bryan Robson, who is 40. Can you imagine what would have happened in Italy, for example, if Carlo Ancelotti had come on the field for Parma?"

Ravanelli has confirmed he will stay at Middlesbrough until the end of the season and he has already been linked to a number of Italian clubs. The chairman, Steve Gibson, is adamant the Italian will see out his contract until 2000, but the relationship between club and player is clearly breaking down.

Ravanelli said: "I am an honest person and it would not be good to go away right now. I still have not chosen a new side. I am happy at the moment with my scoring record of 19 goals in League and cup matches. In England as in Italy work pays off. But in Italy it would be impossible to have three days off after losing a match."

The Manchester City manager, Frank Clark, made a double bid for Dalian Atkinson and the Czech international Václav Ne-

mecek last night. Atkinson is in a pay dispute with the Turkish champions, Fenerbahce, and hopes he can move for nothing. The former Aston Villa and Sheffield Wednesday striker joined City for training yesterday while Fifa, football's world governing body, tried to settle the dispute. He has been on trial recently with PSV Eindhoven.

Clark has also flown in the versatile Nemecek, who is 30 this week and made two appearances in Euro 96. Nemecek, capped more than 60 times, has been playing with Servette Geneva after making his name with Sparta Prague. City can sign him for a nominal fee, with Clark earmarking the experienced player as a centre-half in a revamped defence.

Manchester United have been struck by another injury blow, with Ronny Johnsen ruled out for three weeks with a hamstring strain. Alex Ferguson could be forced to step up his efforts to sign a new defender as the manager finds himself without two of his three first-choice centre-backs. Johnsen limped out of Saturday's win at Coventry on the day David May had an hernia operation which sidelines him for the next five weeks.

Nottingham Forest's caretaker manager, Stuart Pearce, will decide later this week whether he wants to make the step up to full-time player-manager. "There is still a lot to be discussed and considered," said Pearce, who has been offered a three-and-a-half year deal worth between £2m and £3m, depending on results.

Birmingham's talented midfielder Paul Tait has been in a transfer request, claiming he is not wanted at St Andrew's. The 25-year-old, who joined the club straight from school nine years ago, is believed to be a target for Sunderland, Derby County, Stoke City and the German club 1860 Munich.

Crystal Palace have agreed an undisclosed fee with Arsenal for defender Andy Linighan. The 34-year-old Gunners centre-half will discuss personal terms with Dave Bassett, the Palace manager, today.

Richard Gough, who announced last October that he was to leave Rangers at the end of this season after a decade at the club, is to continue his football in America's Major League with Kansas City Wiz. The Rangers captain, who will be 35 in April, had also attracted interest from Sheffield Wednesday and Southampton.

Bristol City have banned 15 spectators for life for their part in the rioting after City's 1-1 draw with local rivals Bristol Rovers at Ashton Gate in December. City will today face a Football Association disciplinary hearing into the riot.

Chang makes his charge in Melbourne



Michael Chang, the world No 2, drives a double-handed backhand in his victory over the Chilean Marcelo Rios in Melbourne yesterday, to reach the semi-finals of the Australian Open for the third successive year. He meets Spain's Carlos Moya, in the last four. Moya, who beat defending champion Boris Becker in the first round, reached the semi-finals with a

four-set victory over Felix Mantilla. In the women's event, Mary Pierce came from behind to beat Sabine Appelmans and Amanda Coetzer brushed past the American Kimberly Po. As court-side temperatures exceeded 50C, the roof over Centre Court was closed to spare players and public from the merciless heat. Report, page 23 Photograph: Allsport

Millwall forced to call in administrators

Millwall have called in administrators, to try to stave off the threat of closure after shares in the Second Division club's holding company were frozen at just four pence each.

A statement from Millwall Holdings and Football Club yesterday revealed that the club's board of directors had "decided to seek an administration order in order to facilitate the reconstruction and refinancing of the company".

The administrators will run the club's business and protect it from creditors while the board tries to sort out its situation.

The Millwall chairman, Peter Mead, yesterday tried to reassure fans and investors over the future of the club by promising that the refinancing package would place Millwall on a firmer financial footing.

"We are looking to refinance the club and simply asked the Stock Exchange to suspend the shares, as we are required to do so by law, in order to carry it out," he said. "We built this stadium [the New Den] and geared up the club for Premier League football. We failed to achieve that objective and sadly last year we were relegated."

"Equally sadly, the costs of running the club as a Premier club remain. What we have been doing in the past, to our disap-

pointment and mine, is to sell players to make up for this shortfall in our income against our Premier League expectations."

"What we have now decided to do is a once-and-for-all reorganisation and refinancing package to mean that we won't have to carry on selling all our best young players just to cover losses, but to strengthen the club to achieve our ambitions."

Former Millwall chairman Reg Burr also expressed confidence that the difficulties would be resolved. "It's obviously a very critical situation but I don't believe for a moment that it's complete doom and gloom."

Another Second Division club in trouble, Peterborough, who have debts reported to be in the region of £2.5m, are expected to confirm Peter Boizot, founder of the Pizza Express chain, as their new owner tomorrow.

The club's manager, Barry Fry, who took over at London Road last May, said that his planned purchase of the shareholdings of former chairman Alf Hand and chief executive Chris Turner never went through.

"There were a lot of problems as we started looking into the financial side of the club and I have concentrated on getting things right on the field of play," Fry said.

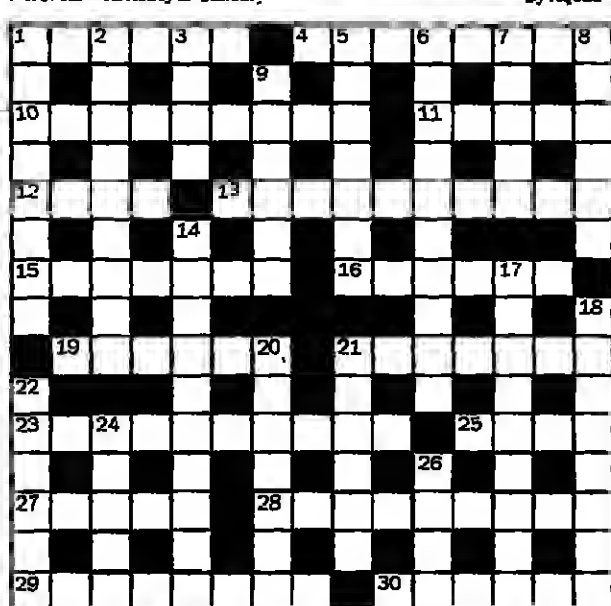
Millwall collapse, page 19

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3202, Wednesday 22 January

By Aquila

Tuesday's Solution



MONOPOLY
DECEASE
DESIST
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WEATHERING
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ZEPHYRUS
EMERALD
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SERENE
ESCAPADE

- ACROSS**
- Athens medley-race (6)
 - Do local magistrates sit on one? (3-5)
 - Sorry hike around area of open valleys (9)
 - Principal route of liquid oxygen carrier? (5)
 - Goes out with two identical notes in quarters (4)
 - Devotee of Austen's hit novel (9)
 - He is one! (7)
 - Small screw fitted to cone-shaped candlestick (6)
 - Perfect example of endless melancholy in English composer (6)
 - Foot-faults called in British matches (7)
 - Paying bill on leaving (10)

- DOWN**
- Expedition as far as ancient city (4)
 - Wood used for making a mast? (5)
 - Carry away Irene, a hit record (9)
 - No easy money, this! (4,4)
 - Protest against goal (6)
 - Coward's pollenosis (3,5)
 - Nervous about match in plantation (9)
 - Energy by sea movement can bring affluence (4)
 - Leftover cheese-spread for old doctors (7)
 - Money tied up, in the name of Shaw's captain (10)
 - Bellini's girl of Roman extraction (5)

- 8** Shape of toast (6)
9 Songster allowed around tavern (6)
14 Homiletics, unexpectedly, in the middle of the Stone Age? (10)
17 Church-leaders, terribly cool, consumed what is sold in bars (9)
18 Tureen is brought out - no longer hungry? (8)
20 Counts detachments of soldiers (7)
21 Britain bearing old queen's flag (6)
22 Sailor comes up with money all round this part of Algiers (6)
24 Dizzy with rum (5)
26 Post goes over some dreary material (4)

Chastened Scotland opt for Townsend

Rugby Union
CHRIS HEWITT

Gregor Townsend will get a belated opportunity to prove himself the most exciting outside-half in British rugby when a chastened Scottish side take on England in the Calcutta Cup match at Twickenham on Saturday week.

The versatile but often mis-cast Northampton playmaker replaces Craig Chalmers in the pivot position following the Scots' underbaked display against Wales at Murrayfield last weekend. Equally significant are two other changes to the middle five positions. Bryan Reupath gets the nod over Gary Armstrong at scrum-half while Ian Smith, the Gloucester flanker, returns on the open-side after missing the Wales match with a broken thumb. Murray Wallace steps down from the back row to make way for his more experienced rival.

The selection makes rather more sense this time around, even though Rob Wainwright, the captain, once again occupies the No 8 position rather than his more effective blind-side role. Richie Dixon, the chief coach, and his colleagues have sensibly decided to use last year's

Five Nations as a template. On that occasion, the back row and half-backs made light of shortcomings elsewhere to take the Scots to within 80 minutes of an unexpected Grand Slam.

Repercussions from the Welsh defeat have also been felt in the front row and the three-quarter line. Dave Hilton, the prop forward from Bath, is relegated to the replacements' bench as Tom Smith, the uncapped Watsonian, earns a debut at loose head while the centre Scott Hastings, a try-scorer last Saturday, is dropped for the second time this season.

Ronnie Ericksson of London Scottish returns at centre and is joined by Tony Stanger, who moves inside from the right wing. Derek Stark, a genuine speed merchant from Melrose, gets his first start in the No 14 shirt since 1993, when he played in all four Five Nations games.

Surprisingly, there is no room for Alan Tait, the former rugby league centre who shone for Scotland A in their 50-point victory over Emerging Wales in Edinburgh last Friday. Indeed, the selectors have declined to promote any of the second-stringers, preferring to make full use of the existing senior squad. Townsend's performance at Twickenham will be of intense

interest to two Scots who are more acutely aware of his talents than most: Ian McGeechan, the Lions coach for this summer's tour of South Africa, and Jim Telfer, his No 2. Both men have worked closely with the mercurial 23-year-old in recent years - McGeechan is Townsend's club coach at Glasgow, and if the Lions rumour mill is up to speed, they are looking at the Edinburgh-born Saint as their first-choice stand-off.

One player who might have something to say about that is Arwel Thomas, who played so brilliantly at Murrayfield while Townsend was struggling to stamp some authority on events from the less influential position of inside centre. Thomas and the rest of his buoyant countrymen face Ireland in Cardiff on Saturday week and the selectors, who name their side tomorrow, are expected to leave well alone.

SCOTLAND (v England, Calcutta Cup, Twickenham, 3 February): R Shepherd (Melrose); D Stark (Melrose), A Stanger (Howick), R Ericksson (London Scottish), K Lagan (Birlingham), G Townsend (Northampton), S Rodd (Glasgow), G Smith (Northampton), G Ellis (Glasgow), M Stewart (Northampton), G Wade (Glasgow), A Reid (Melrose), P Wallon (Northampton), R Wainwright (Northampton), Capt. I Smith (Glasgow), R. B. Watson (Northampton), G Armstrong (Northampton), S. M. M. (Glasgow), G. Armstrong (Northampton), S. M. M. (Glasgow), G. Armstrong (Northampton), S. M. M. (Glasgow).

Free-thinking Lions, page 24

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